WORKERS WORLD
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Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!
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Iraq burns as Bush, Kerry debate medals

Pentagon can't crush struggle for liberation

By Fred Goldstein

Aug. 25—As a brutal and merciless three-week siege of the city of Najaf in Iraq by U.S. military forces comes to a climax, George W. Bush and John Kerry are busily engaged in an ad war over Kerry's military record.

U.S. forces have been pouring massive firepower down upon the city, destroying whole neighborhoods around the Imam Ali shrine, stronghold of the resistance fighters of the Mahdi Army of Muktada al-Sadr.

Bush declared, "We are making progress on the ground" from his ranch in Texas, where he has been holed up for "security" meetings with Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice.

Kerry, on the other hand, has failed to make mention of the occupation or the atrocities being committed by U.S. forces in Iraq. During a major policy speech at Cooper Union college in New York, Kerry concentrated instead on showing that he is "strong on defense." He told the crowd that he "defended his country" in Vietnam and he will "defend it now." He has not moved from the position that he will "stay the course" in Iraq.

But "staying the course" in Iraq means continuing the Bush-Pentagon campaign of occupation and aggression to recolonize Iraq, secure its oil and turn it into a U.S. base for domination in the Persian Gulf. It also means a continuation of unspeakable war crimes against the Iraqi people.

Najaf on fire

The "progress on the ground" Bush referred to is illustrated by the Pentagon campaign of encircling Najaf in a ring of fire. The New York Times of Aug. 24 described the push to crush anti-occupation resistance with an attack that pushed through the Wadi al-Salam cemetery, a sacred six-square-mile burial ground where Imam Ali is buried and where Shiites from hundreds of miles around have buried their dead for centuries because of its religious significance. The cemetery is just west of the Imam Ali shrine.

"In an attack that began just before midnight," wrote the Times, "American tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles pushed south through the cemetery and into the northern edge of the innermost part of Najaf's Old City, just 250 yards from the shrine. The tanks then unleashed dozens of shells on buildings north of the shrine, while the Bradleys followed up with heavy machine-gun fire, setting several buildings ablaze. Explosions filled the night, and smoke poured north from the Old City into the cemetery. Later, an AC-130 gunship, a plane armed with rapid-fire cannons and a howitzer poured shells into the area, causing fires to burn out of control and the northern edge of the city to glow red."

A report from Najaf in the Aug. 23 New York Times described civilian suffering: "Hussein Hadi, deputy director of Najaf's main Al Hakim Hospital, says that the recent fighting has been even worse for civilians than the last time Mr. Sadr and his militia rebelled. Then, fighting lasted for more than two months, and the hospital received about 180 dead, Mr. Hadi said Sunday. In the last three weeks, the daily death toll has been about the same, but it includes more women and children than before.

"'This time, it's the average people that are dying,' Mr. Hadi said. 'Now the Americans are using heavier weapons. We see many children with more severe injuries.'

"In Judaada [a neighborhood just south of the shrine—F.G.], many such casualties have occurred. Majid Mousa, an 11-year-old boy whose leg was blown off below the knee in an American assault on Saturday, was one. Majid's face was freckled with shrapnel, which blinded him, doctors said. His 15-year-old brother was killed in the explosion. His father, a truck driver away on a run, does not know what happened.

"'He will carry the American occupation with him for the rest of his life,' Mr. Hadi said."

Karim al Zuheiri, interviewed for the Aug. 24 issue of the

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SPECIAL CENTER SECTION

Statement of WWP candidates

'Stop the U.S. war on women!'

On Aug. 28, we are marching for reproductive freedom and liberation for women. We believe: "Together we can stop the U.S. war on women!"

We are Leilani Dowell, Teresa Gutierrez, and John Parker, congressional, vice-presidential and presidential candidates respectively of Workers World Party—a revolutionary party that believes in a socialist future where women are not mere instruments of production—or of reproduction!

Two of us are lesbians. And the other has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with women for his entire political life.

We are also workers, people of color, supporters of the labor movement, anti-war and anti-imperialist activists.

We oppose the Bush administration's vicious assaults on women, limits on access to abortion and affordable birth control, censorship of sex education, both at home and abroad, and putting the profits of giant health and drug corporations above women's needs.

We condemn the attacks on the right of all women, including lesbian and bisexual women, to make their own decisions about their sexuality and to lead lives of dignity in their choices.

We deplore the social service cutbacks that eliminate the health care, housing, education, and child care that women

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John Parker
for president

Teresa Gutierrez
for vice president

Leilani Dowell
Peace & Freedom Party candidate in the 8th Congressional District, in San Francisco.

A REAL ALTERNATIVE

Socialists campaign against war, racism, for workers' rights

- What's socialism got to do with it?
- Busting the myths about Cuba
- Why we support the Million Worker March

See center section

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During anti-RNC week

Help distribute this paper!

Your help is really needed to distribute thousands of copies of Workers World newspaper during the Republican National Convention.

We've printed up extra copies of this issue, emblazoned with red ink and revolutionary analysis. The many people who pour into the streets around WWP's office are hungry for the truth about the war for empire, the big-business parties and economic exploitation, racism and other burdens of oppression.

Workers World Party headquarters will be a revolutionary resistance center right in the thick of the gathering for the anti-Republican convention protests. We're at 55 West 17th St. on the 5th floor. That's between 5th and 6th avenues, right in the heart of the action taking place on Sunday, Aug. 29. The mass march assembles in the streets all around our office—from 5th to 9th avenues, from 14th to 23rd streets.

Stop by and see us. And if you can help distribute Workers World newspaper at anti-RNC events, call (212) 627-2994 and ask for Marsha or Sharon. □

Getting out WW in N. Carolina

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Some dedicated activists in North Carolina are using innovative tactics to get out Workers World.

Charlotte, N.C., is a conservative financial center for the Southeastern region of the U.S., with almost every downtown corner dominated by a bank.

But David Dixon, a key organizer with the Action Center for Justice, an affiliate of the International Action Center, says he is getting a tremendous response as he distributes Workers World newspapers.

Where does he leave the news? Almost everywhere! Coffee shops, night clubs, record stores, restaurants, laundromats, bookstores. He'll go into any store that leans toward the "alternative" and ask if he can put out papers.

His biggest success comes when he rides the buses. Bank America owns the transit center itself, so he can't distribute there. Instead he buys a day pass, and when he boards, hands a paper to the driver. Dixon says, "If the driver takes it, I figure I'm home-free." The city bus drivers have just joined the Teamsters, and are generally sympathetic.

Then he proceeds to look around for a likely reader, and ask in a voice loud enough for others to hear: "Would you like a free anti-war newspaper?" If that first person says "Yes," many others follow.

Dixon says: "If the person says 'No,' then I sit down, open the paper wide enough for people to see the headline, and in a minute people start asking for copies.

"Frequently, I've had the entire bus take a Workers World, with everyone sitting there, reading away."

Dixon's suggestion to those who want to distribute Workers World: "People are looking for that alternative source of news. There are 50 people who want a paper for every one who doesn't—and usually that person, especially on public transportation, is just tired from having worked a long day under exploitative conditions.

"Be bold! People want this information!"

Bulk orders of Workers World are available for distribution. Just e-mail: bundles@workers.org for more information. □

NOVEMBER 13-14 • 2004 • NY

WORKERS WORLD PARTY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

After the election, no matter who wins —

THE STRUGGLE IS GROWING

AND IT'S GROWING! Are you one of the millions who want an END to brutal imperialist war and occupation–racism and national oppression–the oppression of women and of lesbians, gay men, bi and trans people –exploitation and impoverishment of the working class–repression by the capitalist state and deceit by the two parties that run it–corporate and military destruction of the environment?

Then you should check out what Workers World Party is doing and saying. This party has been fighting for socialism and against the crimes of the profit-mad capitalist system since 1959. It practices affirmative action, building multinational unity and solidarity, and promotes the leadership of those most held back in this racist, sexist, homophobic society. For decades, it has been in the forefront of the anti-war, anti-imperialist movement and has given leadership in many workers' struggles.

Save the date*– NOV. 13-14 *and plan NOW to participate in a weekend of dynamic discussions among well-informed activists on the vital questions before our movement.

CONTACT WORKERS WORLD PARTY AT:
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Statement of WWP candidates:

'Stop the U.S. war on women!'

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need to survive and thrive with their families-while the Bush administration funnels billions of dollars into war.

And we oppose the fake reforms of both the Republican and Democratic parties, from Clinton's so-called Welfare Reform Act to Bush's No Child Left Behind Act. This is big-business policy masquerading as public policy, leaving women and their families behind in the dust of increasing poverty.

We oppose the intensifying U.S. military and economic war on the world for profits-war that has catastrophic effects on women. Kidnapped into the sex-trade industry, killed in small-arms crossfire and air strikes, driven off their land and out of their countries by brutal "free-trade" agreements, women and their children are bearing a disproportionate burden of this war internationally.

We can stop these outrages through an independent movement that draws on the power and leadership of women who now do a majority of the work of the world in their waged and unwaged work.

We can demand and win complete freedom of reproductive choice for women in the United States, and the economic supports to make those choices real. We can win a living wage for all women, universal health care, affordable housing and child care, and secure pensions in old age. We can stand up for women all around the world by ending racist and imperialist U.S. wars.

And we can work together toward a socialist future, where women's needs and lives will never be sacrificed to profit, where women can advance toward their full power as human beings. □

JOIN US. Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples—Black and white, Latino, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed and students.

If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

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Fri., Aug. 27
Workers World Party forum. International panel on building solidarity against imperialism. Guest speakers include Manik Mukherjee, a leader of the All-India Anti-Imperialist Front, Joachim Guilliard, a spokesperson in Germany for those opposing UN sanctions against Iraq, and Sharon Black, the Washington/Baltimore Coordinator for the Million Worker March. 7 p.m. (Dinner at 6:30 p.m. for small donation.) At 55 W. 17 St., 5th Fl., Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

Mon., Aug. 30
Meet the Workers World Party candidates during RNC protests. Reception following Still We Rise march. 6:30-8 p.m. At 55 W. 17 St., 5th floor, Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

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Resisting GIs get support in Canada

By Dustin Langley
Toronto

According to a Canadian government web page, 30,000 to 40,000 deserters and draft dodgers took refuge in that country during the Vietnam War. Thousands went to Toronto, where many remain to this day.

Will this Canadian city once again become a refuge for soldiers who refuse to fight in an illegal and immoral war?

On Aug. 20, activists from the Support Network for an Armed Forces Union—SNAFU, the support organization for GI resisters—and the People's Video Network traveled to Toronto to interview Brandon Hughey. Hughey is a former member of the U.S. Army who went to Canada rather than participate in an illegal act of aggression.

Jeremy Hinzman, like Brandon Hughey and an unknown number of other soldiers, has also fled the United States in opposition to the war against the Iraqi people.

Hinzman, a 25-year-old from South Dakota, said: "I object to the Iraqi war because it is an act of aggression with no defensive basis. It has been supported by pretenses that cannot withstand even elementary scrutiny.

"First, before the U.S. dropped the first bomb. It was quite evident that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction. Second, the Bush administration had the gall to exploit the American public's fear of terrorists by making the absurd assertion that a secular Baathist government was working with a fundamentalist terrorist group. There was never any intelligence to substantiate this.

"Third, the notion that the U.S. wants to export democracy to Iraq is laughable. Democracy is by the people, not an appointed puppet theater."

Brandon Hughey, a 20-year-old former tank driver from west Texas, said: "I had promised myself that under no circumstances would I allow myself to become complicit in the illegal occupation of Iraq. No contract or enlistment oath can be used as an excuse to participate in acts of aggression or crimes against humanity.

"According to the Nuremberg Principles, which were adopted by the UN as law, a soldier has the responsibility to refuse an order that he knows to be wrong. Based on this law, I refused my order to deploy to Iraq, and came to Canada."

The activists also met with Gerry Condon, who deserted from the U.S. Army in 1969 after refusing orders to Vietnam. He is director of Project Safe Haven and the Right to Resist network, which organize support for U.S. soldiers fleeing to Canada. (SoldierSayNo.org)

Unlike their Vietnam-era predecessors, Hingman and Hughey cannot easily apply for immigration status once they are in Canada. Instead, both have applied for refugee status.

Their claims are pending before Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board. Upon applying for refugee status in Canada, they automatically came under the protections this process provides.

They are allowed to remain in Canada until the board rules on their application. During that time, they are eligible to apply for work permits.

Hughey and Hinzman are both represented by Jeffry House, a Toronto attorney who came to Canada as a draft resister during the Vietnam War. Their claim to refugee status is based on the illegality of the U.S. war against Iraq.

It cites the Geneva Conventions on War and the Nuremberg Principles, which clearly state it is a soldier's obligation to refuse illegal orders and to refuse to participate in war crimes. It also cites the United Nations Handbook on Refugees, which includes in its refugee definitions soldiers who refuse to participate in wars that have been "condemned by the international community as contrary to the basic rules of human conduct."

Gerry Condon noted: "Although it is possible to apply for refugee status at the Canadian border, there is always the danger at border crossings of arbitrary treatment by individual authorities. It would be preferable to enter Canada as a visitor and apply from within.

"In either case, war resisters should seek legal advice before attempting to cross the border. The law office of Jeffry House, who has the most current experience in representing U.S. war objectors in Canada, is located in downtown Toronto, Ontario. He can be reached at JeffryHouse@hotmail.com."

Gerry Condon will be testifying at the Aug. 26 War Crimes Tribunal in New York about the right to resist, the growing resistance in the military and the support network in Canada. □

Iraq War Crimes Tribunal

Political defense of the right to resist

By John Catalinotto
New York

As U.S. planes and tanks attack Najaf in Iraq and the progressive movement in the U.S. prepares for a week of protests at the Republican National Convention, an anti-war group is preparing a session of what it calls an "Iraq War Crimes Tribunal" in New York for Aug. 26.

This tribunal, working from an indictment prepared by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, has charged President George W. Bush and others with war crimes, crimes against peace and crimes against humanity. Its organizers have invited eyewitnesses, GI resisters, representatives of the World Tribunal on Iraq (WTI) from half-a-dozen countries, and others to testify at the tribunal hearing.

This tribunal, of course, has neither the state power nor other powers to enforce its charges, nor does it have any of those indicted in its custody.

On Aug. 23 Workers World spoke with Sara Flounders, a co-director of the organizing group—the International Action Center (IAC)—to ask what she saw as the role of what is called a "people's tribunal."

"There is a direct role the tribunal movement can play," said Flounders, "to protest the new war crime the U.S. military is committing against the people of Najaf and the shrine of the Imam Ali, and against all the people of Iraq and the Middle East. Both we in the tribunal committee here and the WTI internationally have made statements condemning the U.S. attack and recognizing the right of the Iraqi people to resist occupation in defense of their sovereignty.

"Our tribunal will be a strong defense of the right to resist, for the people of Iraq, for U.S. troops who want to refuse to commit war crimes and for the people of the world," she stressed.

Role of people's tribunals

Flounders reviewed the historical role of people's tribunals. "People all over the world and even within the U.S. know that the U.S. government has committed illegitimate wars of aggression—Grenada, Panama, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq in 1991, for example—but the enormous power that U.S. imperialism wields lends a false legitimacy to these wars. People tend to just accept the official U.S. story promoted by its powerful corporate media, think tanks, hired pundits, and so on.

"Holding a people's tribunal reinforces the fact that the war is illegitimate, criminal, even under the laws that the aggressive powers have signed onto. It is important that thousands of people have documented the crimes committed and have presented this publicly. This record becomes a counter to the official story emanating from the aggressors, who are still in power," Flounders said.

The record of the 1991-1992 IAC-organized tribunal on Iraq, which had sessions in dozens of countries and in many U.S. cities, was published as an IAC book and is available on its web site. The same was done with the 1999-2000 tribunal on U.S. aggression against Yugoslavia. Flounders explained that the U.S.-led war against Yugoslavia "was not well understood even inside the anti-war movement here. But this painstaking testimony, connected with international law by progressive and humanitarian attorneys, becomes a people's history of the war.

"In the age of instant media, the tribunal takes on a greater weight. Just this week Yahoo had a front-page reference to a copy of the entire 1991-1992 tribunal we held on the 1991 Gulf War. We have become a sort of anti-imperialist think-tank."

The right to resist

Flounders described what she thought made this tribunal movement and the Aug. 26 hearing different from those in the past.

"In the past wars, the Pentagon had soundly defeated the country. The rulers here were triumphant. We had to limit the tribunal to exposing the crimes.

"Now the U.S. and specifically the Bush administration are having enormous trouble in Iraq. The Iraqi struggle foils occupation at every step. All the Pentagon can do is kill more Iraqis, make their lives miserable and commit more war crimes.

"Now we are not just recounting the crimes. The question is what position you take on the resistance in Iraq. Do you consider those who fight against occupation to be terrorists, or do you consider the occupation itself to be an act of terror?

"When GIs refuse to be sent to Iraq to fight, are they shirkers or are they heroes?

"When there's a struggle like the one in Iraq today," Flounders added, "you are either for the resistance or you are for the occupation. We will show at the tribunal that whether you measure this issue by the yardstick of class solidarity with the oppressed, of humanity against the killing machine, or even of international law, you must be with the resistance.

"Our only means of punishing the war criminals is to arouse a mass struggle against their rule," concluded Flounders. "We have no illusions that international law will be applied against U.S. imperialism. But we hope and expect that our hearing will give greater impulse and political clarity to the protests at the Republican National Convention and contribute to the mobilization for the Oct. 17 Million Worker March and the ongoing struggle." □

The streets belong to the people!

While known war criminals will be commandeering the air waves from the Republican National Convention, protest groups have been told by federal and state judges that they can't rally in Central Park. And the largest armed force ever to guard a political gathering has been assembled in New York.

First a federal judge turned down International ANSWER's lawsuit supporting a rally of Arab Americans in the park on Aug. 28. Then a state judge did the same with United for Peace and Justice's request to rally in the park after the Aug. 29 march past Madison Square Garden.

Free speech is being throttled by a desperate minority whose hands drip oil and blood. But from Najaf to Caracas to New York, the people are rising. Courts, cops and Cobras cannot turn back the people's movement. It is creative and will find ways not to be silenced.

If you're reading this from one of the many protests scheduled during the RNC, congratulations! You have stood up against a tidal wave of intimidation meant to keep you away.

"NEVER AGAIN WAR" KATHE KOLLWITZ

Stand firm in your convictions! You have the right to be here. And you speak for the anti-war majority of the people in this country. □

No, it's not a recovery

Workers face crisis & recession

By Milt Neidenberg

Now is the season of our discontent. Anger and frustration are rising in the ranks of labor and the oppressed communities.

How could it be otherwise?

The imperialist war against the Iraqi people is mired in a quagmire and the U.S. economy is shrinking. There is a systematic decline in the quality of life for workers, especially in the oppressed communities. The heroic resistance of the Iraqi people, seen most recently in the incredible defense of the shrine of Najaf, continues to undermine the strategy of endless wars for the profits of Wall Street, the oil barons and the transnational corporations.

Demands on the workers and the oppressed nationalities continue unabated. It is indisputable that the compelling issues of war abroad and war at home are intertwined. This will have serious consequences—economically, politically and militarily—now and into an unpredictable future.

High-tech military eats up resources

Past and present military spending despite a flagging economy have sapped U.S. capitalism's resources. The current $417 billion military budget, passed by a Senate vote of 98-0, shows how determined the ruling class is to use militarism and war to solve the crisis.

Both presidential candidates are committed to it.

It won't work. Their investment of $200 billion of taxpayers' money to rob the Iraqi people of their oil and other resources is not paying off. Nor are other military adventures to enslave huge sections of the globe.

Taking money that is desperately needed to provide social services and spending it instead on the military exacerbates inflation, hurting the workers, especially the poor and jobless.

The Pentagon doesn't buy hardware in the open market. Prices and profits are unlimited for the military-industrial complex. Militarism ends up being a depressant, not a stimulus, to the economy.

Marxism teaches that the capitalist cycle of development goes through phases of crisis, depression, recovery and boom. Thereafter, a new cycle of crisis inevitably begins, more devastating and destructive than before. Is the present period one of recovery, as the bourgeois apologists want us to believe?

There will be no recovery during an oil crisis. Oil runs the modern industrial economy. Yet, in two separate headlines on Aug. 21, the New York Times promoted the lie that a recovery is in place: "Investors Regain Optimism as Crude Prices Decline" and "An Oil Shock That Could Also Be an Economic Stimulus."

The articles described how oil prices climbed to almost $50 a barrel before dropping to $47.86—a sign, they say, that the oil crisis has peaked. This line was parroted in the Wall Street Journal and other bourgeois media. The stock markets reflected this short-term optimism by gaining for the week.

Does this so-called drop in oil prices confirm the "soft patch" theory? This view, that a short downturn in the economy is now over, is promulgated by Alan Greenspan and the Federal Reserve Board.

Striking truckers and their families marched on the Oakland Port Authority office May 6.

PHOTO: THE DISPATCHER

But it is not true. Only a few weeks ago, when the price of oil hovered at $40 a barrel, the stock markets shuddered and plunged below the levels of 2003. Now, with the price near $50, commentators would have the public believe the economy is in recovery mode. On the contrary, the current spike in oil prices has had a depressing effect on the economy.

Higher oil prices stimulate inflation

The Federal Reserve Board is forced to raise interest rates. This increases the cost of borrowing and investing, dampening any optimism that the Gross Domestic Product will grow.

Increased oil prices operate as a tax hike on the worker/consumer, who can least afford higher prices of food and other necessities. Those hurt most are the lower-paid, service-oriented workers, mostly oppressed nationalities, immigrants and women—the majority of the work force. Consumer spending constitutes two-thirds of the GDP.

Oil prices will remain high, as demand exceeds supply. Recently, the resistance movement in southern Iraq blew up a strategic pipeline. This will continue to happen.

The U.S. military machine requires a gigantic amount of oil to feed a high-tech mobile army, air force, and huge armadas—particularly aircraft carriers. Gas guzzlers at home crowd the highways. Capital spending on energy exploration has lagged badly since the 1980s, and speculators have grabbed onto oil as a profitable commodity that enables them to influence price. They can capture the market, raising the specter of another Enron-type debacle.

If you're one of the more than 11 million unemployed, it's a recession. If you're a consumer who can't make ends meet, it's a recession. The March 2001 recession, which, according to the government, ended in late November 2001, never solved the unemployment crisis. The heavy loss of good-paying jobs in manufacturing was followed by a plunge in the technology sector. The capitalist media, reflecting the downsizing, called it a "jobless recovery."

The recovery that followed was stimulated by a sharp reduction in interest rates to 1 percent, the lowest in 45 years. It was a debt-fueled recovery that did not ameliorate the crisis in the job market. Credit card debt exploded in 2002, rising today to 83 percent of the GDP. (Wall Street Journal, Aug. 20) Bankruptcies have since increased as household income declines. Exploitation of the work force intensified and accelerated the race to the bottom.

The deep, protracted technological revolution and private ownership of the means of production have displaced millions of workers. While productivity increases, almost 25 percent of industry lies idle.

The recession of 2004 has begun. It will not go away.

Clearly the trade unions and the entire working class have reached an historic turning point. A fight back is in the making.

Truckers' strike spread like wildfire

Between June 28 and July 13 in strategic centers of transportation, port truckers on the East Coast and the Gulf Coast parked their rigs in protest of low pay and the high cost of delivering cargo to and from the ports. They almost shut down the ports of Boston, Savannah, Ga., Charleston, S.C., and Miami.

Job actions disrupted the ports of New York, Newark, N.J., Baltimore, New Orleans, Los Angeles and Long Beach, Calif., according to the June issue of the Dispatcher, monthly newsletter of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union.

This is as close as it gets to a national strike—a strategy that served the working class well in the 1930s. The drivers coordinated, centralized and expanded on a tradition that should be emulated.

These truckers, multinational and unorganized, who bought their rigs on the installment plan, are exploited by the same huge transnational corporations that rule shipping and retail companies like Wal-Mart. They are in the same boat with millions of organized and unorganized workers who make up the strategic sector of low-paid, service-oriented workers.

The truckers want collective bargaining power—a union. But that is denied them by the government and terminal operators like Stevedoring Services of America, a Pentagon pet that also runs Iraq's ports. Their militant action comes in the midst of war and a campaign of patriotic frenzy about national security and "terrorism."

Here is an excellent example of a strategy that goes beyond surrendering to the "do as you're told" management mentality. It's an opportunity for the anti-war movement and other progressive forces to support an exemplary workers' struggle.

Without broad support, the truckers were forced to end their general strike when a federal court ordered them to cease engaging in any "conspiracy, combination or violation" of any provision of the Sherman or Clayton anti-trust acts. Sounds like a century ago, when workers joining collectively to bargain over the price of their labor power were called a conspiracy.

The time is ripe to break the old mold of labor-management relations. New forms of struggle are necessary to stop the anti-union, anti-worker offensive. The truckers have set a splendid example.

The anti-war movement and others fighting for their own issues should join the laboring masses in one giant class-wide independent regrouping. Coming together would truly shake the foundations of the capitalist system, which is based on exploitation at home and imperialist wars abroad. □

ON THE PICKET LINE

New regulations cut overtime

The Bush administration's latest attack on workers came on Aug. 23 when new overtime regulations took effect. A study conducted by the Economic Policy Institute predicted that 6 million workers stand to lose overtime pay. That money will go into the bosses' pockets.

On July 13 three former Labor Department officials issued a report claiming that expanding bosses' exemptions beyond the former rules, which had been in effect since 1949, still carries out the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

But that's no surprise. Who is the Department of Labor's top spokesperson on overtime pay? None other than Ed Frank, the former top spokesperson for the National Federation of Independent Business—which represents businesses that want to take away workers' overtime pay. So the fox is not just guarding Bush's DOL henhouse—it is actually in the henhouse.

Though the AFL-CIO mounted a year-long grassroots campaign to push the Democrats in Congress to vote against the regulations, its efforts were steamrolled by the Bush attack. The only thing that will win back overtime is workers taking their demands to the streets in mass action. That's another reason to join the Million Worker March on Oct. 17 in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit www.millionworkermarch.org.

NLRB rules against grad students

The Bush administration struck another anti-union blow on July 15 when the National Labor Relations Board ruled that graduate students who work as research and teaching assistants at private universities don't have the right to unionize. Graduate students employed by public universities, however, are governed by state law, and many have voted to improve their salaries, benefits and working conditions by unionizing.

The board reversed a four-year-old decision involving 2,000 graduate employees at New York University who were the first to unionize at a private university. Phil Wheeler, the Auto Workers' regional director who worked on the NYU struggle and similar drives at Columbia, Brown, Tufts and the University of Pennsylvania, told a UAW gathering on Aug. 11 that the union would continue the fight, even if it means striking. He noted that there are 100,000 graduate employees at private universities around the country who need union representation.

Lauren Nauta, a graduate teaching assistant in history at the University of Pennsylvania, told the July 16 New York Times that she and many of her friends are furious about the ruling. "We think it's an injustice that graduate employees at private universities have been denied the same right as those at public universities," she said. "This ruling shows the partisan nature of the NLRB."

Statement of ANTIWAR 4 MILLION WORKER MARCH

'Chance to unite anti-war and workers' movements'

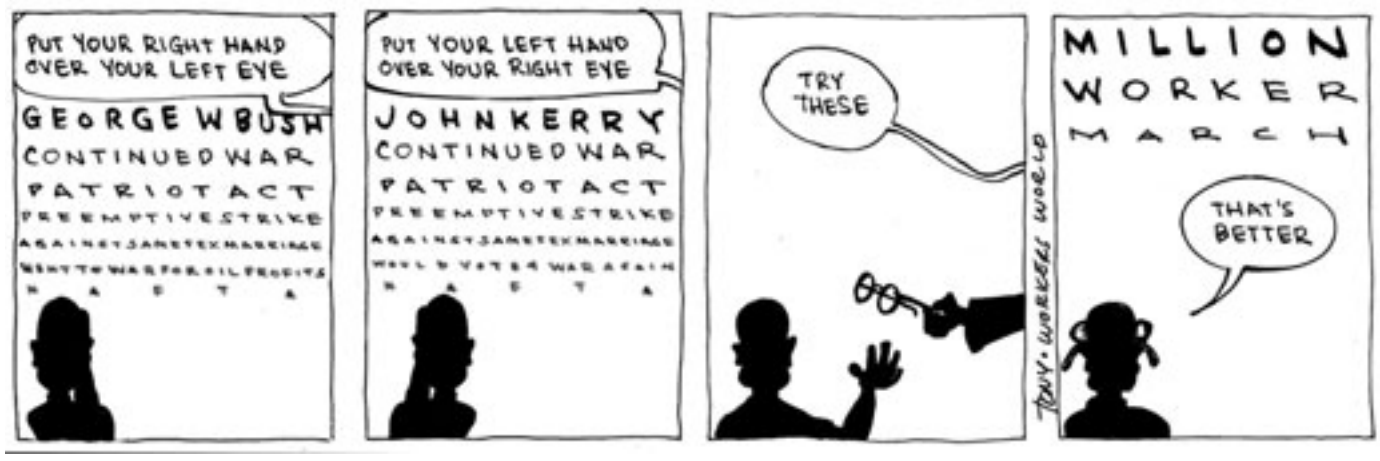
The following appeal was sent out via email by the newly formed group, AntiWar 4 the Million Worker March.

▶"Get on the bus" for the Million Worker March, Oct. 17, 2004, Washington, D.C.!

▶The struggle of working people and the struggle against the war are the same struggle!

▶Bring the troops home now! End the occupation of Iraq!

▶Organize a local "AntiWar 4 the Million Worker March" committee now!



Dear Activists and Organizers,

This fall in Washington, D.C., you will have a timely and historic opportunity to unite the anti-war movement with an unprecedented and vitally necessary mass march of working people speaking for themselves. This is a rare opportunity that serious anti-war activists can't afford to pass up.

Some of the strongest voices and most active groups in the labor movement, together with the active support and participation of organizations representing every progressive movement and cause, will be "getting on the bus" to D.C. on Sunday, Oct. 17, for the MILLION WORKER MARCH. A sea of workers from every industry, from every union and every place where workers want a union, from every part of the country, will be streaming into the capital to demand things like jobs, a living wage and workers' rights.

They will also express their anger over the senseless dying that is going on every day in Iraq and elsewhere, and their desire that it end now. Why? Because it is working families who bear the burden, it is their loved ones who are sent off to fight and die—and it is their, our, the workers' money that is stolen to pay for war and occupation.

What makes the Million Worker March unique is that the event´s principal organizers want to make the anti-war movement´s demand to "End the Occupation of Iraq and Bring the Troops Home Now" central to the march's message and the goals.

We are asking anti-war activists to set up local "AntiWar 4 the Million Worker March" committees. Start meeting, planning and reserving buses to go to Washington on Oct. 17. Anti-war coalitions and groups need to let us know ASAP if their group can be listed as an "AntiWar 4 the Million Worker March" committee in their locality or region.

We encourage activists to form committees in their unions, schools, work places, churches and communities. It is our hope that "AntiWar 4 MWM" committees will complement the labor union and community-based organizing that is going on across the country for Oct. 17. ...

YOU CAN HELP

- Add your name, title and endorsement as a signer to this urgent call.
- Set up an AntiWar 4 the Million Worker March committee.
- Commit to sending a bus from your city, town or region.

The call for a Million Worker March came from one of the most well-known labor organizations in the country, famous for its long history of militancy, boldness and courage in defense of working people: Local 10 of the International Longshore Workers Union in San Francisco. Over the past few months this call has rolled across the country, picking up the support of scores of labor unions, labor activists and leaders including:

The Coalition Of Black Trade Unionists; Bill Lucy, Secretary-Treasurer, AFSCME; the National Education Association; Transportation Workers Union Local 100 (NY); AFSCME District Council 1707 (NY); South Carolina AFL-CIO; Farm Labor Organizing Committee; AFSCME District Council 92 (MD); D.C. Labor Against the War; International ANSWER; actor Danny Glover; American Indian Movement; ILWU Local 34; Troy and Albany Labor Council (NY); National Immigration Solidarity Network; New York City Labor Against the War; Global Women´s Strike; Teamsters Black Caucus; comedian Dick Gregory; Myra Shone and Ralph Schoenman, Taking Aim, Pacifica; National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 3825; Howard Wallace, co-founder, Pride at Work; Jim Haughton, Director, Harlem Fightback; Justice 4 Homeless, SF; United Steel Workers of America Local 8751; International Action Center; former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark; Nellie Bailey, Harlem Tenants Council; Howard Zinn, historian; Noam Chomsky, linguist; AFSCME Local 95, Local 205, Local 215, Local 389, Local 167, Local 1881, Local 1930; ILWU entire West Coast division; CUE Local 3; and many more.

Working people are coming to Washington, D.C., on Oct. 17 because whether their concern is about jobs, or decent wages, or layoffs, or union busting, or the battle to protect our pensions and Social Security and to make health care a universal right instead of a privilege for the wealthy—with all we face, we had better raise our own voices and act in our own interests instead of relying on the next president, whoever that will be.

And most important, the time for us to speak in our own voice is not after people vote in November, but before. The Million Worker March on Oct. 17 is about the people telling the president, the candidates, the politicians and the corporate elite who are the real power behind the election campaigns and the politicians to "Shut up!" and listen to us for a change.

Let´s make sure that after many of us march in New York against the Republican convention, Nov. 2 isn't the only important date this fall. We urge all of you to work to make the Oct. 17 Million Worker March in D.C. the next major event for the entire anti-war movement. If we rise to this challenge, we will put the next president and Congress on notice that we will accept no excuses for prolonging the occupation of Iraq and wasting lives and precious resources that should go toward satisfying people´s needs like housing and schools. Moreover, we will have helped to forge a critical alliance between the grass roots of the labor movement and the anti-war movement that would represent a whole new level of unity, potential and power.

Does this sound like something worth working for? Does this sound like something you've been waiting for? You can help make it happen.

In solidarity,

Clarence Thomas, *Co-Chair, Million Worker March Organizing Committee, ILWU Local 10*

Brenda Stokely, *President, District Council 1707 AFSCME, Co-chair, NYC Labor Against the War*

Chris Silvera, *Secretary-Treasurer, Local 808 IBT, President, National Teamsters Black Caucus*

Ralph Schoenman, *Communications Coordinator, Million Worker March*

Larry Holmes, *International Action Center, Steering Committee ANSWER*

Sharon Black, *Washington/Baltimore Coordinator, Million Worker March*

Ramsey Clark, *former U.S. Attorney General*

CONTACTS **www.millionworkermarch.org.**
Email: AntiWar4theMillionWorkerMarch@action-mail.org.
Phone: San Francisco (415) 771-2028;
Washington/Baltimore (202) 355-8666;
Los Angeles (323) 936-7266;
New York (212) 633-6646;
Boston (617) 524-3507.

America West workers join union

Customer-service workers at America West Airlines voted to join the Teamsters on Aug. 17 to fight low wages, lack of overtime pay and meager benefits for part-time employees. Wages start at $7.65 an hour. The 3,200 ticket agents, gate attendants, tour sales representatives and others work at 50 airports and two call centers around the country.

Sex bias lawsuit against Costco

Though Costco may offer higher wages and better benefits than rival Wal-Mart, it's in the same boat when it comes to sex discrimination. On Aug. 18 Shirley Ellis filed a national class-action lawsuit accusing Costco of systematically discriminating against women in promotions. Studies show that only 17 percent of Costco's top managers are women while nearly 50 percent of its employees are women. Only two of Costco's 33 top executives are women.

But that wasn't always the case. The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 which created the NLRB was won by the sweat and blood of the workers in the early 1930s. That historic legal victory for labor's rights was won through independent mass struggle. And that's just what's needed now to turn things around in favor of the workers. It's yet another reason to join the Million Worker March on Oct. 17.

Driver's licenses & immigrants

Immigrants face the loss of jobs and mobility as states from New York to California attempt to curtail undocumented workers' right to obtain a driver's license.

In New York City Brian Barraza, president of the Association of Mexican-American Workers, told Workers World that as a result, "There's going to be more people that don't have work—livery, taxi drivers. Mothers and fathers that go with their kids to the schools and they are going to have to walk."

He said many will be forced "to drive without a license just for survival, not because we want to break the law.

"You know the situation for the immigrants after Sept. 11—they are attacking the immigrant people," Barraza said. "So we are trying to say to the people of this country that we are supporting the economy of the United States—we are doing labor work.

"The government is trying to divide us. And we, the immigrants, should not be the target. The target should be the government."

—Leslie Feinberg

Another reason to fight the system

Students are caught in debt trap

By Stephanie Nichols

Young people in the United States are told from preschool on that they're lucky to live in a country that provides the opportunity to succeed at whatever they choose. No one ever mentions how much that actually costs.

If you make it past high school and decide to further your potential with a college education, that potential—as with everything else under this system—is only for those with money to pay for it.

Over the past decade, according to the College Board, average tuition fees rose 47 percent at public four-year colleges, and 42 percent at private ones. Just in the past year, tuition and fees nationwide rose 14 percent.

The average state university costs $4,694 a year, plus $5,942 more for room and board. Private colleges cost an average of $19,710 in tuition and fees, not including $7,144 for living expenses.

The result is that the average graduate emerges from college saddled with at least $30,000 in debt from student loans and credit cards. Most student loans come from corporations like Nellie Mae and Sallie Mae.

According to the 2002 National Student Loan Survey from Nellie Mae, student loan debt had risen 66 percent since 1997. Over the same time period, students' average income had increased by only 8 percent.

Almost 70 percent of undergraduates take out loans to pay for school. Three-quarters of higher-education enrollees need to work while taking classes.

Every year, about 600,000 undergraduates drop out of four-year schools.

Almost one in every five college and professional-school graduates says he or she has had to change career plans because of student debt.

Hourly wages for young college graduates have been declining since 2001. Before that, wages for recent college graduates did increase—by an average of 3 percent annually throughout the 1990s—but that hardly kept pace with the rise in student debt.

A graduate with a bachelor's degree will earn at least $20,000 more a year working full-time than a high school graduate—but the most desirable entry-level jobs pay wages too low for the indebted, who must give a large percentage of their salaries to Sallie Mae or Citibank.

So in actuality, going to college with the dream of boundless opportunity and upward economic mobility is hindered or forfeited by a deep hole of debt and expenses. Working-class youths who dare to strive for something better are punished by this profit-driven system.

On top of the rising student debt, health-care premiums increased 13.9 percent last year. Some 17.9 million people in the United States between the ages of 18 and 34 lack even the most basic health insurance. They make up the single biggest bloc of the uninsured—41 percent of the country's total.

Under U.S. law, the parents have the primary responsibility to fund a student's college education until age 24. Before that, students are not considered financially independent and whether they qualify for financial aid will be based on their parents' income.

Most students entering college are fresh out of high school, usually 18 years old. Isn't this the age when you are legally supposed to be considered an adult, independent of your parents? That's what the courts think. They try 18-year-olds as adults.

Federal Pell Grants were once one of the best and most recognized options for students needing financial aid. But, because the Department of Education recently revised its eligibility guidelines, 84,000 students will be excluded from the program entirely this year. And 1.5 million more will get reduced awards.

Young people in this country are being forced to face the harsh reality that only a small minority is allowed financial success. The rest must pay their dues so the rich can get richer while the working class gets poorer.

Social reforms like free tuition and easier-to-obtain grants and loans were won through militant working-class struggles of the past. The existence of a bloc of socialist countries where education and health care were free put further pressure on the capitalist governments to compete with their revolutionary achievements. But since the collapse of the Soviet Union, social programs for workers in this country have been in a steady decline.

Welfare has been eliminated, affecting young people the most. Youth who can't afford a college education are lured into the military to fight wars that further the grip of this system's oppression worldwide.

The only way to change this system and get the right to an education and health care is for youth to take the power into their own hands, bring the struggle to the streets and demand to be heard. □

University of Mass at Amherst

Solidarity wins ruling for int'l students

By Bryan G. Pfeifer

In a historic decision rendered Aug. 15, an arbitrator ruled that the University of Massachusetts at Amherst must cease and desist charging international graduate student employees an international student "fee" and that all who paid the "fee" shall be refunded.

"This is a major victory vindicating the civil rights of international student employees," Jennifer Turner, history graduate student and president of the Graduate Employee Organization, said on Aug. 13.

The decision affected about 1,000 international graduate students represented by the Graduate Employee Organization, Auto Workers Local 2322. The union represents 2,500 graduate student employees at UMass-Amherst.

The decision did not affect about 600 other undergraduate and graduate international students not represented by GEO. But on Aug. 20 the university issued a news release stating it would fully comply with the arbitrator's decision and apply it to all international students on campus.

Background

In spring 2004 the administration implemented a $65-per-semester fee charged only to international students. They said it was to fund the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System. Later it was learned that only about $8-$10 would go toward SEVIS, and the rest to the International Programs Office budget.

The IPO processes visas and provides networking, employment and other services for international students and domestic students traveling outside the United States. Under a Patriot Act provision, international students already pay a $100 fee to pay for SEVIS.

SEVIS, updated in real time, is a database that links colleges and universities to the Department of Homeland Security. It monitors the activities of all international students, including home location, classes taken, hours worked, status of bills and any other information the department deems necessary.

If international students don't comply with SEVIS—for instance, by not updating where they live or falling out of "good standing" with the university—they can be arrested and possibly deported to their homeland. International students, under various measures in the Patriot Act and other federal and state laws, are already restricted to 20 hours of work per week and only one job.

SEVIS, to track international students and staff, was in the federal planning stages for several years before Sept. 11. After Sept. 11, SEVIS was mandated under the Patriot Act. But no federal funding was mandated, thus leaving colleges and universities to bear the cost.

GEO filed its grievance with the administration last Dec. 29. The union claimed that the "fee" violated the non-discrimination contract clause, which bars discrimination based on national origin or citizenship, among other protected statuses. The administration rejected the grievance outright.

In stressing the university's reliance on international students "to provide teaching and research services to the university," American Arbitration Association arbiter James S. Cooper stated, "The real basis for charging this fee to the foreign students is because the [IPO] office is under funded, the users are easily identified and have no choice but to maintain their ... visas."

Cooper affirmed the union's charge that discrimination was inherent in the way the administration levied the "fee" because it was mandatory only for international students.

He also stated that processing of the necessary paperwork for international students was a "typical human resources activity that the university routinely provides to all students."

This victory is the direct result of a strategic militant campaign.

From the beginning, it was led by GEO's African, Latin@, Asian and Native American caucus. The ALANA chairperson, Chinese graduate student Zixul "George" Liu, led over 200 students to boldly refuse to pay the "fee," even though their resistance could lead to deportation.

These students have been academically withdrawn, and GEO and the administration are currently bargaining over their status.

Throughout the campaign, outstanding unity and solidarity were extended to the besieged international students. These included a petition on GEO's website signed by over 1,000 supporters; a statement supporting the international students written and signed by GEO's executive staff; and resolutions passed by both the Graduate Student Senate at UMass Amherst and the Amherst, Mass., Town Council.

There were informational house visits to the campus community, leafleting and a media campaign. The GSS newspaper The Voice dedicated two spring issues to this struggle.

The highlight of the spring struggles was a 48-hour hunger strike. It began April 13 and culminated in a rally attended by over 300 GEO members and allies, including many local residents, protesting racism and the administration's class war in their town.

GEO members say this struggle and victory hold many lessons for progressive and revolutionary movements, especially during a time of ongoing U.S. crises and exciting new initiatives such as the Million Worker March.

"I'm very happy, and I hope this will be an example for students at other universities," said Yassir Munif, a sociology graduate student and GEO secretary-treasurer.

To read the arbitrator's decision and for more information see: www.geouaw.org.

Pfeifer is a Labor Studies graduate student at UMass-Amherst and a GEO member.

Youth organize to fight imperialism

Statement of FIST:

Fight Imperialism—Stand Together (FIST) is a newly formed group of young activists committed to fighting racism, sexism, oppression of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people, and exploitation of the working class, all of which result from imperialism and capitalism. We believe that the only way to achieve true liberation for all peoples throughout the world is through socialism.

From the anti-war movement to struggles against police brutality, bigotry, globalization and more, youth have played a decisive role in all progressive social movements. We are living in a time when the need for a revolutionary movement, especially among youth, is stronger than ever.

Youths are being forced to kill and die in a criminal war against the Iraqi people. The possibility of finding a job with decent wages and benefits is getting slimmer all the time. The number of youths, particularly youths of color, being brutalized by the police and locked in prison grows larger every day. Tuition is skyrocketing at universities all over the country, making it impossible for youth to get an education without incurring a huge amount of debt.

It's time for youth to organize to build the type of society that puts people's needs first. FIST is dedicated to achieving such a society by building a multinational, multi-gendered organization of revolutionary youth.

Workers World newspaper will be featuring articles by FIST activists on the struggles and successes of youth worldwide. Please email ***FIST@workers.org*** *to get involved.*

BRING THE TROOPS HOME NOW!
Money for jobs, not for war

MUNDO OBRERO

PARKER–GUTIERREZ–DOWELL 2004

What's socialism got to do with it?

By John Parker
Workers World Party
presidential candidate

Most people in this society know that the system is rotten. They can smell its stink every time they get dehumanized by a job search, police brutality or other social interaction in which human beings' value is based on their net worth.

Millions are waking up to the realization that, in this U.S.-imperialist dominated world, people are suffering the horrors of starvation, extreme poverty and war—especially children.

But the "anybody but Bush" philosophy reasons: There's no viable alternative system, so as we hold our nose in the voting booth to elect a representative of the ruling capitalist class, we must also hold our noses for the duration of our lives to endure the stench of life under capitalism.

We say there is an alternative: socialism.

What would socialism look like in the U.S.? To answer that, we have to look at what we have now and how it would differ under a socialist government and economy.

Our current capitalist society pits worker against worker in a suicidal race for survival. Workers' wages do not reflect the value of what they produce. And further, wages are illegally stolen from them by their employers on a regular basis.

An investigative report by Steven Greenhouse in the April 4 New York Times found that cheating workers out of pay for hours worked has become a common practice in chains like Taco Bell, Wal-Mart, Pep Boys, Family Dollar and Toys "R" Us. Tremendous pressure is placed on lower and upper level managers to shave off hours of the non-salaried employees for fear of losing their own jobs.

Today the barometer of what's considered a good or bad economy is based on the level of profits, not the amount of misery faced by workers.

Roger Whelan, resident scholar at the American Bankruptcy Institute in Alexandria, Va., says that "Consumer debt has doubled in the past 10 years, excluding mortgage indebtedness, while personal savings have decreased from 5.8 percent to 2 percent in the past 10 years."

The lesser evil

What does Democratic Sen. John Kerry, the supposedly more moderate representative of the ruling class, suggest? Here's some of what Kerry said in an interview with the Wall Street Journal, published on May 3:

"I think I am American business's friend. Personally, I think I'd be more effective for business than this administration...

"I believe I could be far more effective in opening up marketplaces and creating a fair playing field and being an ambassador for business. ..."

Aren't workers hurting more than businesses? So why can't he be an "ambassador" for us?

Because he's already serving the masters of monopoly capital.

What makes socialism different?

For one thing, socialism isn't dependent on the profit system. Bush and Kerry are basically tied to the same banking, corporate and military-industrial monopolies. These giants of capital and industry can only exist by maximizing profits year after year. And the only way they can do this is by increasing the exploitation of working people here and abroad.

It is not in their interest to provide more housing, health care or decent union wages and benefits, since if we get to keep more of what we produce, in the form of higher wages, they get less in the form of profits.

This also translates into the need to go to war, since not enough profits can be made just by stealing more and more wages from one group of workers. The capitalist bosses have to reach overseas and internationalize their thievery of the

Continued on page S4

John Parker for president

WWP candidates demand:
FREE THE FIVE CUBANS
who defended their country against terrorism and are now in U.S. prisons for preventing deaths on the island.

René González

Antonio Guerrero

Gerardo Hernández

Ramón Labañino

Fernando González

Busting the myths about Cuba

By Teresa Gutierrez
WWP vice-presidential candidate

Doctors in Cuba recently began a campaign called the "120-Year Club." The goal of the campaign is to extend life expectancy for Cubans to 120 years.

This socialist island may be the only country in the world discussing such an ambitious undertaking. It contrasts vividly with the trend in most industrialized capitalist countries where declining access to quality, affordable health care is the norm. This restriction on one of the most basic human needs results in lowered life expectancy, especially for the poorest sectors.

The Cuban government's aspiration for its population to live as long as possible is one of the many examples of why U.S. imperialism has tried non-stop for 45 years to sabotage the Cuban Revolution.

The 120-Year Club is also a dramatic example of how the Cuban Revolution, despite obstacles, always aspires to raise the living standards for its people.

Under both Democratic and Republican administrations, the U.S. government has relentlessly carried out a cruel economic blockade against Cuba—the longest in U.S. history. Washington has engaged in countless assassination attempts, biological warfare, efforts to politically isolate Cuba and more such aggressive acts. The 2004 elections will not deter from this longstanding position.

For 45 years, Washington has failed. But it has never stopped trying.

The Cuban Revolution has stood so firm it seems invincible. The revolution is so deep that the masses overwhelmingly defend it to the core. Its leaders, especially President Fidel Castro, continue to inspire millions around the world.

Socialist Cuba is a shining example of what a society can look like when the government represents the interests of the people and not the corporations.

In the last 10 years, U.S. imperialism has carried out a two-track strategy. Track one was an attempt to overturn the revolution from the outside—with economic and political sabotage. Track two was an attempt to overturn the revolution from within—by inciting counter-revolution inside Cuba.

Both strategies have failed.

But in the last year, the Bush administration has stepped up U.S. aggression. These efforts may represent another track, a military track where the possibility of an armed intervention is not out of the question.

Stand against U.S. aggression

For all who love Cuba and for all who respect the sovereign right of every nation, vigilance against increased U.S. aggression is of the utmost urgency. The Bush administration in the last year has imposed harsh measures to further undermine the revolution.

During a Rose Garden speech on Oct. 23, 2003, George W. Bush stated that Cuba "must change"—code words for a potential Iraq-type invasion.

He called for a Presidential Commission for a Free Cuba, intensifying the blockade and repressive measures against U.S. citizens traveling to Cuba. He declared an increase in U.S.-produced radio and television broadcasts to jam Cuban broadcasts.

This year, Washington unjustly ousted Cuban diplomats, including some who helped administer support for the Cuban Five political prisoners held in U.S. jails. It cancelled immigration talks and denied visas to Cubans who had been legitimately invited to the U.S.

The Bush administration has particularly tightened the U.S. ban on travel to Cuba.

On May 6, the White House announced measures that would make it harder to travel to Cuba and spend money there. Cuban Americans can now only visit their families once every three years and for no longer than 14 days. "People to people" exchanges—licensed trips by universities, churches, etc.—are being shut down.

There is no better time than now for progressives and revolutionaries to do everything to step up solidarity with Cuba. The time is ripe to work hard to free the innocent Cuban Five heroes, who languish in federal prisons for the "crime" of defending their homeland from U.S.-sponsored terrorist groups.

There is no better time to fight for our right to travel anywhere we want, including revolutionary Cuba.

U.S. visitors inspired

In recent years, U.S. imperialism had allowed a wave of travel to Cuba. The ruling class thought that the people from this country who traveled there would entice Cubans with capitalist culture. They hoped that youths and students or businesspeople and librarians who traveled to Cuba would be avid promoters of the "U.S. way of life."

But just the opposite happened. The vast majority of people from the U.S. who traveled to Cuba—at least those who were not on the CIA payroll—were strongly influenced by what they saw there.

Teresa Gutierrez for vice president

It was the Cuban Revolution that inspired the travelers.

Despite being a poor country trying to develop despite the blockade, Cuba provides free health care for the population—and visitors. Rent is more than affordable. There is a housing shortage but there are no homeless people.

If you want a job, you can get one. Some social inequalities still exist, but racism, sexism and lesbian/gay/bi/trans discrimination are outlawed.

Cubans can walk the streets without having to worry about racist police. The International Monetary Fund cannot come in and shut down factories.

And most important, Cubans have the dignity that comes from determining their own destiny, free of imperialist domination.

This is why the imperialists do not want you to travel to Cuba.

The Parker-Gutierrez-Dowell campaign says just the opposite. We urge you to travel to Cuba. We urge you to defy the travel ban and defend your right to travel. Go to Cuba and learn what a socialist society can provide for its people.

Go to Cuba and get the ideas the capitalists don't want you to get: that workers in the U.S. can run society without the bosses and the oppressors. That's what the Workers World Party election campaign is all about. □

Bring the troops home now!

Money for jobs–

NOT WAR IN IRAQ

Abolish the Pentagon
Money for housing, childcare & human needs, not occupations in Iraq, Haiti, Palestine & Afghanistan

U.S. hands off Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia, Korea & Sudan
Globalize solidarity, not imperialist plunder
Independence for Puerto Rico

Union jobs or guaranteed income
Raise the minimum wage to $15
Jobs not jails for youth

Free, universal health care for all
Full reproductive rights for women

Leilani Dowell for Congress, Teresa Gutierrez for vice president & John Parker for president

VOTE FOR PARKER & GUTIERREZ

People's needs before profits

Isn't it time workers spoke for themselves?

Every four years it's the same story.

AUGUST 30 Tired of Bush & Kerry?
Meet the anti-war candidates

End racism, police brutality and the death penalty
Reparations & social justice for people of color and colonized nations

Same-sex marriage rights now
Equality for women and lesbians, gays, bi and transgender people

Full rights for immigrants
Repeal the Patriot Act
Free victims of anti-Arab, anti-Muslim repression

Education is a right
Restore affirmative action
Lower the voting age to 16

Free Mumia, Leonard Peltier, the Cuban 5
and all political prisoners

Tax the rich
End corporate welfare
Make corporate polluters pay to clean up our environment

Millionaire/billionaire politicians funded by Big Business pose as friends of workers. But after the elections, no matter who wins, the results are the same: more war, more union busting, more racism and bigotry, more hardship for poor and working people. The choice between Republican and Democrat this year is a choice between the greater evil and the lesser evil.

Workers World Party runs in the elections, too. But we're not in it to play the warmongers' game. We're here to crash the elections.

And we have great candidates—John Parker for president and Teresa Gutierrez for vice president. People of color. Workers. Anti-war activists. Fighters for poor and working people's rights.

We have a message you won't hear anywhere else: Bring the troops home now. Real change happens through class struggles, not elections. Workers need their own party to represent their interests. United in solidarity, we can organize an independent movement to fight for a society that puts people's needs before profit and global conquest.

protesting at the RNC

JOHN PARKER for president
TERESA GUTIERREZ for vice president
LEILANI DOWELL for Congress

MON., AUGUST 30 6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.
following the Still We Rise march
55 West 17 Street, 5th floor, New York City
DINNER ~ $5 DONATION

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Hear LeiLani Dowell, Teresa Gutierrez & John Parker speak on:

Will voting for Kerry or Bush stop imperialist wars abroad and racism and rising poverty at home?

SAT., SEPT. 18 2 p.m.
P.S. 41, 116 West 11 St., New York City
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JOIN W★RKERS WORLD PARTY

Why we support the Million Worker March

By LeiLani Dowell
WWP member, Peace & Freedom Party congressional candidate

October 17 will be a historic day for the labor movement and the working class. People from across the country will converge on Washington, D.C., for the Million Worker March under the slogan, "Organizing in our own name."

Its demands include universal health care for all, a national living wage, repeal of the USA Patriot Act and slashing the military budget.

The MWM mission statement says, "The vast majority of working Americans are under siege. ... The time has come to mobilize working people for our own agenda. Let us end subservience to the power of the privileged few and their monopoly of the political process."

That the Million Worker March is being organized a month before the presidential election is a testament to the growth of an independent current in the organized labor movement and the working class.

The MWM was initiated by the African American-led International Longshore & Warehouse Union Local 10, one of the most progressive and militant unions in the U.S. It has been endorsed by over 135 labor unions and progressive organizations so far.

Over the past two years, millions of people have joined anti-war rallies with the slogan "Money for jobs, not for war." The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride of 2003 was labor's first successful effort in recent years to unite with oppressed communities against anti-immigrant laws. And we know from history that victories are not won by the ballot box, but by the movement of people in the streets.

The Parker-Gutierrez-Dowell campaign fully and enthusiastically supports the Million Worker March. Like the organizers of the Oct.17 event, we are dedicated to building a working-class movement independent of the Democratic and Republican parties—before, during and after the elections.

The MWM will see participation by all sectors of the working class—union members and unorganized employees, the growing ranks of the unemployed, immigrants, youths and rank-and-file soldiers being sent off to fight imperialist wars. It will be multinational, multigendered, lesbian, gay, bi and trans.

March organizers see the connection between the issues that affect us all—the increasing attempt to destroy the U.S. labor movement as "free trade" and privatization worsen conditions for workers the world over; the occupation of Iraq that is killing innocent people while robbing money from social services here; the lack of funding for education, coupled with increased prison spending and police repression in cities and towns; the bigotry that allows violence to be committed on LGBT communities with impunity while denying same-sex partners the economic benefits of marriage.

All these problems and more are the result of a system that places private profit above people's needs. And as loyalists to that system, neither the Democrats nor the Republicans are able or even interested in correcting those problems.

This is obvious from the presidential campaigns being run by these two parties at present. While the current "anybody but Bush" campaign espouses fear about Bush's racist, right-wing agenda, the Democrats offer a similar program—an extension of NAFTA, support of the Patriot Act, increased military spending with increased troop presence in Iraq, and increased hostility towards Cuba, North Korea and Venezuela.

While we understand the terror many experience contemplating four more years of Bush, we also know that our anger and resistance must not be channeled into an "alternative" with a different face and the same policies.

LEILANI DOWELL
Peace & Freedom Party candidate in the 8th Congressional District, in San Francisco.

While the top AFL-CIO leaders take their usual pro-Democrat election-year stance, organizers of the Million Worker March say, "Only our own independent mobilization of working people can open the way to addressing our needs."

The Workers World Party election campaign is fighting for a system to solve the problems of working people, a system that places people's needs at the top of its agenda. That system is socialism.

Socialism won't be created overnight. But we are clear that the best way to fight for that system is to continue building a movement that is cognizant of its independent power, a movement that does not rely on those whose interests are inherently different than those of the workers.

To get involved with the MWM, visit www.millionworkermarch.org. □

What's socialism got to do with it?

Continued from page S1

value created by workers and even steal the natural resources lying beneath their feet.

However, workers don't just sit back and take this increasing drain on their standard of living. They fight back by building and joining unions, protesting injustice and strengthening unity with other workers facing the same plight.

Since unity builds strength among workers facing a common enemy, the most important task of the ruling class is to sow divisions amongst the workers—primarily through the use of racism, immigrant-bashing, sexism and anti-lesbian, gay, bi and trans bigotry—to weaken the working-class movement.

No more dog-eat-dog

So what would a socialist U.S. look like?

Just take away all of the evils necessary to maintain capitalism—like racism, dog-eat-dog competition, oppression and war—and you'll begin to imagine it. Can you smell the fresh air?

Generosity and sharing would not be considered violations of patent laws, since ruthless competition would go out with the profit system.

In other words, open-source computer programming like Linux would not be discouraged, but encouraged for the benefit of humanity. Pharmaceutical technology and discovery would not have to be restricted to monopoly giants like Eli Lilly. The continent of Africa, in need of generic pharmaceuticals and new drugs to deal with the genocidal spread of HIV/AIDS, would not have to fight the U.S. pharmaceutical industry in the World Court to receive the medicine it needs.

A socialist government in the U.S. could finally begin assisting Third World nations to develop industry independently, as the Soviet Union once assisted Africa and the Caribbean.

And people here would likewise benefit. Take the example of Cuba, which freely offers its breakthroughs in medicine and agriculture to the world. Its medical industry is socially owned by the people, not by an individual or corporation that relies on Wall Street reviews of its stock value. Cuba is not dictated to by Wall Street, it is dictated to by its own workers.

Socialism in the U.S. would lay the basis for real equality for people of color, women, lesbian/gay/bi/trans communities and others facing special oppressions under capitalism daily.

Solidarity, not war

War and war preparation is a hindrance to socialist development.

The Cold War contributed greatly to the downfall of the former Soviet Union. Since the birth of the Russian Revolution, when 14 capitalist and imperialist countries openly tried to invade it, the USSR was dogged by military threats from the U.S., including nuclear threats. The USSR had to spend enormous amounts of money to keep up its defenses against hostile imperialist aims—a drain on their economy.

War serves the purpose of maximizing profits. Since socialism instead thrives on building the standard of living for the majority, war is contradictory to its interests.

When the Soviet Union was born in 1917, most of the world was colonized by the U.S., British, French, Dutch, Belgians, Spanish, etc. But the existence of a huge socialist state changed the world relationship of forces. This happened in large part because the revolution, as a social and economic rival to Western imperialism, provided the space in which colonized countries were able to win independence.

A peaceful world is in the interest of socialist countries. Forging unity with the Third World countries by minimizing their economic desperation is in sync with that goal.

The profit motive force is also behind environmental plunder: if it turns a profit, no matter if there'll be hell to pay down the line, it must be done. That's the view of capitalists who burn fossil fuels like crazy, over-fish our oceans, destroy our ozone layer, animal species and forests, and pollute our food and water.

With the shackle of profit severed, this country's oceans, air and land could once again inspire poets, songwriters and artists.

And, the big question: What about democracy?

Lenin, the leader of the Russian Revolution, wrote this about U.S. democracy in 1919: "One of the most democratic republics in the world is the United States, yet nowhere is the power of capital, the power of a handful of billionaires over the whole of society, so crude and so openly corrupt as in America."

We currently live in a democracy for the rich. When factories close down in our communities; when health clinics no longer take the sick; when a draft forces our loved ones into battle—working people are not permitted to vote on the matter. Those decisions are made by decree according to a "democratic" decision made among the powerful elite in their corporate suites. Money—lots of it—then puts their representatives in office.

Socialist revolution, on the other hand, flips the tables. It doesn't just take over the old oppressive state. New structures created by the working and poor people during their struggle for political and economic power will make the decisions and enforce them. The former elite, having lost their grip over society's wealth, will have to abide by the rule of the real majority.

Real estate developers won't plan cities; community councils, unions and environmentalists will. Weapons manufacturers and oil barons won't decide foreign policy; people of all nationalities committed to the solidarity of the human race will. □

Support the Workers World Party election campaign
Isn't it time workers spoke for themselves?

The choice between Republican and Democrat this year is a choice between the greater evil and the lesser evil. Certainly when it comes to the interests of the workers and oppressed worldwide, the answer to the bosses' evil is not to vote for Bush, author of the bloody war and occupation of Iraq--nor vote for Kerry, who declares, "failure is not an option."

Workers World Party runs in the elections, too. But we're not in it to play the warmongers' game. We're here to crash the elections.

Our goal is to reach tens of thousands, if not millions, of people with a message they won't hear anywhere else: Bring the troops home now. Real social change happens through class struggles, not elections. Workers need their own party to represent their interests. United in solidarity, we can organize an independent movement to fight for a society that puts people's needs before profit and global conquest.

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The AIDS pandemic

Two parties, one record of shame

By Imani Henry

According to the activist group AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, 43 million people in the world are living with HIV/AIDS. As of 2003, women represented 30 percent of the newly infected; 19.2 million women worldwide now live with HIV/AIDS.

In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control report between 850,000 and 950,000 people living with HIV. Since 2002, 40,000 per year have become infected. While the CDC has yet to include transgender people in its AIDS reporting, of the newly infected, 70 percent are men and 30 percent are women. Sixty percent of the new cases were men who contracted the virus through sex with male partners.

Although African Americans and Latin@s represent only 12 percent and 14 percent of the U.S. population, respectively, they accounted for 50 percent and 20 percent of the newly infected in 2002. Half of all newly infected people globally are under the age of 25. (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services)

AIDS is a preventable disease. Yet it is the greatest health crisis the world has ever known.

It is a disease in which racist, sexist and anti-gay governmental policies add insult to injury. Over 2 million people have died but there is still no cure. All this has united an international movement to demand the billions of dollars needed to sustain life and combat this global pandemic.

The United States, the richest country in the world, could fund a global AIDS program at the cost of $10 billion a year. Instead, the Bush administration will have spent 12 times that amount on the war in Iraq by September 2004. (costofwar.com)

Dems & Reps track record on AIDS

On Aug. 18, President George W. Bush announced that he would "set aside $120 million for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria." (Reuters, Aug. 19) Whether or not the money will actually make it to the fund is another story.

The continent of Africa is home to only 10 percent of the world's population yet Africans make up 70 percent of the people living with AIDS. (News 24. com) Asia has the fastest-growing HIV rate, with 1.1 million new infections in 2003 alone.

The Bush administration has yet to make good on its 2003 promise to provide $15 billion to fight global AIDS over five years. So far, only $3 billion has been authorized in the 2004 U.S. budget. Not to be outdone, the Kerry/Edwards ticket has pledged that, if elected, they would contribute $30 billion to fight global AIDS. (AIDSVote.org)

Both the Clinton and Bush administrations paid lip service to the AIDS movement on the campaign trail, but their actual records speak volumes.

Act-UP created a "Crimes against Humanity" fact sheet on President Bill Clinton. During his first presidential campaign, Bill Clinton made a promise to set up an extensively funded research project to find a cure for AIDS. Once in office, he completely abandoned this idea.

In 1993, Clinton signed into law the HIV Immigration Ban and Travel Restrictions. The law not only authorized deportations but enforced "a 10-day limit on U.S. travel for HIV+ foreign nationals," forcing the AIDS movement to hold international conferences outside the United States.

In 1994, in a racist, sexist maneuver, Clinton fired Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders, an outspoken proponent of the use of condoms and their distribution in the public schools. By his second term, Clinton's policies had helped usher in a new wave of AIDS activism. Not only did he refuse to lift the ban on needle exchanges, but he gave only $100 million toward funding for Africa's AIDS orphans.

But it was Clinton's signing of the Welfare Reform Act in August 1996 that drastically affected the lives of all poor and working people, especially people living with AIDS.

George W. Bush, unlike Clinton, has not hidden his real agenda. In 2000, when asked by activists about his position on AIDS, Bush said: "I do not favor needle-exchange programs and other so-called 'harm reduction' strategies to combat drug use. I support a comprehensive mix of prevention, education, treatment, law enforcement and supply interdiction to curb drug use and promote a healthy, drug-free America, not misguided efforts to weaken drug laws."

In July 2003 ACT-UP documented 19 reactionary policies, including creation of the Advancing HIV Prevention initiative, a CDC program used to identify and track people living with HIV to "prevent" them from further transmitting the virus. Bush continues to champion "abstinence-only" sex education, allocating $50 million for programming annually.

During the 2000 presidential elections, AIDS activists hounded both Gore and Bush at campaign stops. This "hounding" of the candidates helped keep the issue of generic drug patents to fight global AIDS in the national news.

This election year, again, AIDS activists are not letting the Democrats or Republicans off the hook. In New York City during the Republican National Convention, the Still We Rise March, led primarily by people of color, people living with AIDS and lesbian, gay, bi and trans activists, may be the largest AIDS-related demonstration in the United States in the last decade.

The Still We Rise coalition was built on a platform of solidarity around HIV/AIDS, homelessness, health care, immigration, housing, civil rights, criminal justice, and welfare. Over 35 organizations were brought together through the long-time leadership of progressive groups such as New York AIDS Housing Network, ACT-UP New York, Picture the Homeless, Housing Works Inc., and Families United for Racial & Economic Equality.

On Aug. 30 the Still We Rise march past Madison Square Garden will bring thousands into the streets in solidarity with people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide. Still We Rise promises in its news release, "As the world spotlight turns to New York for the Republican National Convention, we will ensure that issues affecting low-income communities are also projected onto the world stage." www.stillwerise.org) □

Olympic Games

Cheers for anti-war Iraqis, graffiti for U.S.

By Monica Moorehead

The Olympic Games will conclude Aug. 29. This year they are taking place in Athens, the birthplace of the Olympics. Greece is also the country where, in 2003, some of the most important protests were held against the U.S.-led Iraq war.

These protests helped to intensify mass anti-U.S. sentiment throughout the world. This political sentiment has carried over to the Olympics in Greece.

Across the street from the U.S. Embassy in Athens, there is graffiti that reads "F—k the USA," with a swastika replacing the "S," equating U.S. imperialism with the Nazis.

There are also stenciled anti-war images on walls throughout Athens, including one that depicts an Iraqi torture victim from the Abu Ghraib prison.

Polls indicate that at least 95 percent of the people in Greece oppose U.S. foreign policy.

During the Aug. 13 opening ceremony, the U.S. Olympic team of 576 people, the biggest contingent from any country, received a luke-warm reception from the stadium crowd. Before the games began, coaches and Olympic officials had oriented the U.S. delegation to play down the kind of arrogant behavior that has occurred repeatedly at previous Olympics. (Sports Illustrated, Aug. 23)

Iraq, which sent one of the smallest delegations of athletes to this Olympics, received some of the loudest and longest applause and ovations from the 75,000 stadium spectators during the opening ceremony. Millions more around the world saw and heard this response.

The fact that Iraqi athletes made it to Greece was a minor miracle. They had to be airlifted to Athens due to the chaotic situation the war has created in Iraq.

Once the games began, every time the Iraqi soccer team took the field they were cheered by the thousands of spectators inside and outside the stadium. Significant numbers of Iraqis live in exile in Greece.

These athletes are not only positioning themselves to win a medal, but are also making strong political statements against the brutal occupation of their country.

U.S. President George W. Bush made a re-election campaign ad showing Iraqi and Afghani flags coupled with these demagogic remarks: "At this Olympics there will be two more free nations—and two fewer terrorist regimes."

In response to this ad, an Iraqi soccer player, Salih Sadir, stated: "Iraq as a team does not want Mr. Bush to use us for the presidential campaign. He can find another way to advertise himself."

Another player, Ahmed Manajid, said: "I want to defend my home. If a stranger invades America and the people resist, does that mean they are terrorists? ... Everyone [in Falluja] has been labeled a terrorist. These are all lies. Falluja people are some of the best people in Iraq."

The Iraqi soccer coach, Adnan Hamad, remarked: "My problems are not with the American people. They are with what America has done in Iraq: destroy everything." (BBC, Aug. 20)

It is unfortunate that the voices of the Iraqi athletes are virtually being silenced by NBC and its cable affiliates, which are broadcasting their usual biased coverage, exulting over U.S. athletes' medal count at the expense of talented athletes from other countries. □

By Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row

The imperial itch

Mumia Abu-Jamal is the best-known death row political prisoner worldwide. On July 15, the NAACP passed a resolution during its convention in Philadelphia, where Mumia had been arrested and convicted, demanding he be granted a new and fair trial. Mumia's lawyers are making the same legal demand to the state and federal appeals courts. During his 1982 original trial, Mumia was a victim of a racist, judicial frame-up because he was a former Black Panther and outspoken critic of police brutality.

Being on Pennsylvania's death row for 22 years has not silenced Mumia from speaking out against war, racism and repression, as this selection from one of his recent columns shows:

In the time it takes to blink an eye, politicians turn on a dime, campaigning for wars on a whim, and moments later, claiming that the war was "for the benefit" of those warred upon!

I am often amazed at how similar the argument was in favor of slavery. Tens of millions of Africans were dragged to the Americas, to toil in feverish hells, for centuries, "for their own good."

And what of the bloody nationalist uprisings raging across occupied Iraq? They are "terrorists," we are assured by the manufactured politicians and their corporate media. It is but a bit part of this endless "war against terrorism" that seemingly sparks "terrorism" where it had not existed before.

After viewing how blithely the Americans (let us not speak of silly "coalitions," ok?) have attacked, occupied, and installed complacent puppets in control, is there any wonder why Al-Qaeda is growing by leaps and bounds, not just in the Arab World, but in Europe, as well?

In such a state as this, does the upcoming presidential race look like an exercise in utter futility? Will it really mean any substantive difference between what has come before, or mere differences in degree? What does it really matter, if all that happens is a "kinder, gentler" imperialism? ...

The recollections coming from former members of the White House inner circle are less surprising than they were simply obvious: The Bush White House wanted to wage war against Iraq from Day One? How shocking!

What would have truly been shocking is if they hadn't, for then, they would have flown in the face of 50 years of American post-world War II history.

What is needed won't, indeed, can't come from the corporate parties—it must come from the people themselves. □

'Regime change' led to hatred of U.S.

How CIA overthrew Iranian gov't in 1953

By Sako Sefiani
Los Angeles

It has now been 51 years since a U.S. coup on Aug. 19, 1953, overthrew a democratically elected prime minister in Iran and brought the despised dictator, the Shah, back to power to rule with absolute despotism for another 26 years.

Four years ago the New York Times obtained a copy of the still-classified CIA secret history of that coup. That history, according to a Times article by James Risen published on April 16, 2000, and available on the Web (search Google for New York Times Special Report: The C.I.A. in Iran), reveals the inner workings of a plot that set the stage for the Islamic Revolution 26 years later and for a generation of anti-U.S. hatred in one of the Middle East's most powerful countries.

The document discloses how the United States, in order to gain control over Iran's oil and expand its dominance in the region, plotted and executed the coup in collaboration with Britain. The CIA has refused to make some files public, claiming they were destroyed in early 1960s.

This was the first successful regime change by the United States. Washington was to carry out many more. The next one came the following year in Guatemala.

A short history

Restive under decades of British colonial domination, nationalism had grown among the Iranian people. In 1951, Iran's parliament voted to nationalize the oil industry. Legislators backing the law elected its leading advocate, Dr. Mohammed Mossadegh, as prime minister.

Britain responded with threats and sanctions. Prime Minister Mossadegh refused to back down. So British intelligence officials proposed a joint plan to oust him to their U.S. counterparts.

The newly inaugurated Eisenhower administration became especially interested when it learned that the Iranian communist party—the Tudeh Party—was strong, active and growing in popularity.

CIA Director Allen W. Dulles approved $1 million to be used "in any way that would bring about the fall of Mossadegh. The aim was to bring to power a government which would reach an equitable oil settlement ... and which would vigorously prosecute the dangerously strong communist party."

Within days, agency officials identified a high-ranking officer, Gen. Fazlollah Zahedi, as the person to spearhead a coup. Their plan called for the shah to play a leading role. But the young shah wanted to continue his kingdom and was afraid of losing his throne if he went against the wishes of the people and the parliament, so he was very reluctant to go along. He was to be pressured and threatened to participate in the coup.

According to the document obtained by the Times, CIA officials began planting anti-Mossadegh articles in the local press. The coup began on the night of Aug. 15. At first, it did not succeed and General Zahedi, who was to replace Dr. Mossadegh, fled.

But Kermit Roosevelt, the Middle East envoy at the time and grandson of Theodore Roosevelt, tracked Zahedi down and convinced him that the coup could still succeed if they could persuade the public that he was the lawful prime minister. (Roosevelt, by the way, became a vice president of Gulf Oil after he retired from the CIA in 1958.)

To accomplish that, they had to get out the news that the shah had dismissed Mossadegh and appointed Zahedi. So the CIA station in Tehran sent a message to the Associated Press in New York, asserting that "unofficial reports are current to the effect that leaders of the plot are armed with two decrees of the Shah, one dismissing Mossadegh and the other appointing Zahedi to replace him." The CIA and its agents also arranged for the decrees to be mentioned in some Tehran papers.

On Aug. 16, prospects for reviving the operation were dealt a seemingly fatal blow when it was learned that the shah had fled to Baghdad—because people were pouring into the streets when they learned of the coup.

People rioted in the streets for three days. They dismantled the statues of the shah and his father.

The CIA gave up on the operation. But Roosevelt insisted that there was still a chance for success if the shah would broadcast an address on the Baghdad radio, and if Zahedi took an aggressive stand.

On the morning of Aug. 17, the shah finally announced from Baghdad that he had signed the decrees.

Believing that the shah's departure and the arrests of some officers involved in the coup had removed the danger, Dr. Mossadegh let his guard down. The government recalled most troops it had stationed around the city.

That night the CIA arranged for Zahedi and other army officers to be smuggled into the embassy compound for a "council of war."

They agreed to start a counterattack on Aug. 19. Using travel papers forged by the CIA, key army officers went to outlying army garrisons to persuade commanders to join the coup. But once again, the shah disappointed the CIA when he left Baghdad for Italy as his exile.

CIA forges 'iron hand'

On the morning of Aug. 19, several Tehran newspapers published the shah's decrees. Soon pro-shah crowds were building in the streets.

"They needed only leadership," the secret history says. And Iranian agents of the CIA provided it.

One of the agency's most important Iranian agents led a crowd toward Parliament, inciting people to set fire to the offices of a newspaper owned by Mossadegh's foreign minister.

Another Iranian CIA agent led a crowd to sack the offices of pro-Tudeh newspapers.

Iranians working for the CIA and posing as communists harassed religious leaders and staged the bombing of one cleric's home in a campaign to turn the country's Islamic religious community against Mossadegh's government.

"By 10:15 there were pro-shah truckloads of military personnel at all the main squares," the secret history says.

By noon the crowds began to receive direct leadership from a few officers involved in the plot. Within an hour the central telegraph office fell. Telegrams were sent to the provinces urging a pro-shah uprising. After a brief shootout, police headquarters and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs fell as well.

The Tehran radio remained the biggest prize. Army officers and police overwhelmed the radio station. Pro-shah speakers went on the air, broadcasting the coup's success and reading the royal decrees.

At the embassy, CIA officers were elated. Kermit Roosevelt got Zahedi out of hiding and took him to the radio station, where he spoke to the nation.

Dr. Mossadegh and other government officials were rounded up. Officers supporting Zahedi placed "known supporters" of the coup in command of all units of the Tehran garrison.

The shah returned to rule with an iron hand, taking orders from his bosses in Washington.

CIA and the U.S. media

Western correspondents in Iran and Washington never reported that some of the unrest had been stage managed by CIA agents posing as communists. And they gave little emphasis to accurate contemporaneous reports in Iranian newspapers and on Moscow radio asserting that Western powers were secretly arranging the shah's return to power.

In one instance, the history indicates, the CIA was apparently able to use contacts at the Associated Press to put on the news wire a statement from Tehran about royal decrees that the CIA itself had written.

But mostly, the agency relied on less direct means to exploit the media.

The Iran desk of the State Department, the document says, was able to place a CIA study in Newsweek, "using the normal channel of desk officer to journalist." The article was one of several planted press reports that, when reprinted in Tehran, fed the "war of nerves" against Mohammed Mossadegh.

The history discloses that a CIA officer, working under cover as the embassy's press officer, drove two U.S. reporters to a house outside Tehran where they were shown the shah's decrees dismissing the prime minister.

Kennett Love, the New York Times reporter in Tehran during the coup, wrote about the royal decrees in the newspaper the next day, without mentioning how he had seen them. In an interview, he said he had agreed to the embassy official's ground rules that he not report the U.S. role in arranging the trip.

After the coup succeeded, Love did in one article briefly refer to Iranian press reports of U.S. involvement. And the New York Times also published an article from Moscow reporting Soviet charges that the United States was behind the coup. But neither the Times nor other U.S. news organizations appears to have examined such charges seriously.

Love said: "I wanted to let Freedman [his boss] know that I knew there had been U.S. involvement in the coup, but that I hadn't written about it. I expected him to say, 'Jump on that story.' But there was no response."

Long live solidarity!

Twenty-six years later, during the revolution of 1979, the Iranian people overthrew the shah and the Islamic Republic was born. When the students in Tehran overran the U.S. Embassy and took the staff hostage, demanding the return of the shah to face trial, this writer was in Illinois on a student visa. From many people's treatment of me and other Iranians, it was obvious that the people of the United States had been kept in the dark—either due to CIA and Pentagon manipulations of U.S. corporate media or the latter's complacency and collaboration.

Such anti-democratic and repressive policies, which at times have been outright war crimes and have cost the lives of untold numbers of innocent people in various countries, and which continue to this day, have been committed through the decades in all corners of the world by both Republican and Democratic administrations. And they have caused a tremendous level of ill will, mistrust and hatred toward the United States.

Only the people—not the Democrats, not the Congress and not the courts—can change the policies and priorities of this government, by organizing and building a movement to challenge the corporate government on the streets, just as was done during the civil-rights movement a few decades ago.

Only the people can stop this government in its tracks and redirect the billions of dollars spent every year to wage war on the poor of the world in the interest of transnational corporations, can force them to spend it instead on jobs, health care, education, housing, retirement and other social programs that will benefit the people.

On Oct. 17, when workers from all over the country march on Washington in the Million Worker March, I will be thinking about the day when the CIA, unbeknownst to the people of the United States, overthrew our popular prime minister and imposed the will of the Empire on us.

I will view the march of the U.S. workers as the long-awaited answer to Washington: "We are the workers and we will not let you oppress our sisters and brothers overseas for the benefit of the corporations anymore!"

Long live solidarity among workers of all nations, that sends shivers down the spine of the Empire! □

Burning a portrait of the Shah in Tehran, Iran, 1978.

Iraq burns as Bush, Kerry debate medals

Continued from page 1

British Guardian, said an old woman living a few doors away had been one of the victims. "An American sniper shot her in the chest and stomach," he said. "It was impossible to get her to hospital. She died. We, the people of Najaf, are the victims of all this."

The newspaper went on, "Civilians in Najaf's old city have had no water or electricity since the fighting began. They have had no ration cards for two months, and are running out of food.

"Five days ago, a U.S. tank pulled up outside the house of Yassir al-Abayechi, one of Mr. Zuheiri's neighbors, whose home is now on the wrong side of the frontline. 'The tank suddenly appeared,' said Mr. Abayechi, a 22-year-old student. 'The American soldier in it started shouting, "Go, go." I understand a few words of English so I grabbed my stuff and ran. I took my mother, sister and brother. We haven't been back.'"

U.S. imperialism and its military are sinking deeper and deeper into a quagmire. It is a familiar and unstoppable cycle of intensified aggression followed by a greater resistance. Each military victory, beginning with the capture of Baghdad, has brought about atrocities and humiliation, which have deepened and broadened the struggle against the occupation. Nothing more clearly illustrates the insoluble dilemma of Washington than the battle for Najaf.

Young fighters in Najaf defend mosque from U.S. attack.

U.S. dilemma: military power, political weakness

Whatever the outcome of the present offensive in Najaf, U.S. imperialism and its military are sinking deeper and deeper into a quagmire. This process began the day they invaded. It is a familiar and unstoppable cycle of intensified aggression followed by a greater resistance.

Each military victory, beginning with the capture of Baghdad, has brought about atrocities and humiliation, which have deepened and broadened the struggle against the occupation. Each military triumph has resulted in greater political isolation for the U.S. forces and their collaborators, greater hatred for the occupation and consequently a wider guerrilla war and more potential for insurrections.

Nothing more clearly illustrates the insoluble dilemma of Washington than the battle for Najaf. The Mahdi militia in Najaf number at most in the 1,000-2,000 range. They have only light arms and no anti-aircraft or anti-tank weapons. They do not have the night-fighting equipment, helmets, flak jackets, endless supplies and rapid, high tech-medical support of the U.S. troops. Yet they have held off the mightiest military force in world history for three weeks.

What they do have is anti-colonial consciousness, determination and, above all, the political sympathy and support of the masses, not only in Iraq but in large sections of the world.

Washington has F-16s, C130s, Abrams tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles, helicopter gunships with Hellfire missiles, howitzers, high-tech satellite-to-ground communications, night-vision capabilities and all the means to militarily overcome the insurrection in Najaf.

But the colonial occupiers also have the undying hatred of the Iraqi people, whom they have bombed, shot, raided, tortured and disrespected in every conceivable way. To attack the Imam Ali shrine, to take it over, even with puppet troops, is to magnify and multiply that hatred across a wide region of the world. The Bush administration knows it; the U.S. high command knows it; every U.S. ambassador in the Middle East, as well as South and East Asia knows it. Every person who does business anywhere in the Muslim world knows it.

Imperialist profit motive drives the offensive

The drive to conquer Iraq and to expand the empire of the U.S. transnational corporations is not an end in itself. Their aim is to increase their profits and the reach of the Pentagon. This requires that the U.S. military subdue the resistance in Najaf.

The high command of the Marines and of the Army are waging a war of terror in a fruitless attempt to intimidate the Iraqi people into submission. Defeating the insurrection would send a message to the entire region. But this effort will have the reverse effect.

U.S. tank in Najaf.

From a military point of view, it would be a lot easier to take the Imam Ali shrine and the old city of Najaf than it will be to triumph in the guerrilla war that is raging all around Iraq.

It is one thing to be able to conquer a fixed position where the Iraqis have to stand and fight, such as in a limited insurrection. But should the U.S. forces—using the window dressing of a few hundred Iraqi puppet troops force-marched into battle—take the shrine, the resistance will not be conquered but will only revert to guerrilla form. And it will undoubtedly be wider.

There are still 2 million Shias in the Sadr City section of Baghdad, which is an anti-occupation stronghold. Falluja and the entire region north and west of Baghdad is a bastion of resistance. The Mosul region in the north is also hostile territory for the occupation forces.

As of Aug. 25 U.S. officials admit to at least 50 attacks a day on their forces. The latest number given of U.S. soldiers killed is 958. Thousands more have been wounded. Oil installations around Basra and in the north are under constant attack. Puppet officials are the target of assassination throughout the country.

This cannot be stopped by a U.S. military victory in Najaf.

Iraqi Olympic team denounces Bush

A measure of what is in store for U.S. forces in the long run caught the Bush administration by surprise and riveted the attention of the world.

Bush tried to score a propaganda victory in one of his campaign ads by touting the Iraqi Olympic team as a representative of the new so-called democracy brought by the U.S. But, according to columnist Robert Scheer, writing in the Los Angeles Times of Aug. 24, "Members of the very successful Iraqi Olympic soccer team beg to differ, blasting Bush's attempt to use their participation in the Games as justification for the U.S. occupation of their country. 'My problems are not with the American people,' Iraq's soccer coach, Adnan Hamad Majeed, told the Associated Press. 'They are with what America has done in Iraq: destroy everything. The American Army has killed so many people in Iraq.' His star midfielder, Salih Sadir, agreed: 'Iraq as a team doesn't want Mr. Bush to use us for the presidential campaign.... We don't wish for the presence of the Americans in our country. We want them to go away.'

"These are Iraq's favorite sons, stars of the national sport," continued Scheer. "Yet they all seem to be saying the same thing: America's military is not wanted on our land. Another team member, Ahmed Manajid, demanded to know: 'How will [Bush] meet his God having slaughtered so many men and women? He has committed so many crimes.' The athlete added that were he not playing for his country he would 'for sure' be fighting in the Iraqi resistance."

The heroic struggle and sacrifice of the Iraqi people against the occupation and to regain their national independence requires the greatest solidarity of the anti-war movement. Most importantly, it means opposing not only the Bush administration and its quest for victory but John Kerry and the Democratic Party, whose stated goal is to do a "better job" of carrying out the occupation.

Kerry is running around the country defending his war record. If he were not just another sophisticated tool of imperialism, he would be touting his ANTI-war record. Instead, he is running from it and stressing his participation in the criminal war that he once denounced.

During the Vietnam War he condemned the war crimes ordered by the U.S. policy makers. The attempt by Washington to stabilize its occupation of Iraq and create a puppet regime there is as much an act of imperialist aggression as that earlier war. The invasion of Iraq was a crime; the occupation is a crime; and it would be a crime and a betrayal of internationalism and solidarity with an oppressed people struggling for national liberation to close one's eyes to the vicious imperialist policy of Kerry and the Democratic Party leadership just because of the reactionary character of the Bush administration.

The only effective way to fight the occupation, imperialist war and intervention is through independent mass mobilization and militant struggle against the war makers in Washington and their corporate masters on Wall Street. Every effort must be made to link up this struggle with the fight against the growing exploitation and oppression at home. □

workers world editorial

Behind Israel, the U.S.

New developments highlight the strategic relationship between U.S. imperialism and its Israeli client state as co-oppressors of the peoples of the Middle East.

First, the Bush administration announced it would not protest the Israeli regime's approval of new settlements in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. This means Washington has abandoned its own so-called "road map" to a Palestine settlement. Instead, Bush has lined up with Sharon's criminal seizure of Palestinian territory.

Second, 2,250 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails are waging a hunger strike. In 2003, the International Federation of Human Rights, in cooperation with several Israeli and Palestinian human rights groups, concluded that there were "flagrant violations" of human rights of these prisoners. Amnesty International concurred, writing of "mass detention in cruel, inhuman and degrading conditions."

The prisoners demand the end to humiliating and unnecessary strip searches, more frequent family visits, improved sanitary conditions, public telephones, better medical care and other basic human rights. Their struggle deserves the support of progressive, working-class and anti-war forces the world over.

Don't expect sympathy from the Bush administration, which has its own parallel prison brutality scandal both in Abu Ghraib in Iraq and in Guantanamo, the U.S. base on the occupied tip of Cuba. In both style and substance, the U.S. occupation of Iraq parallels the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Bush certainly wants to attract voting blocs. And both fundamentalist Christians and other committed pro-Israel forces hold influence in this administration. But the real impetus behind the relationship of U.S. imperialism and Israel is Washington and Wall Street's interest in controlling the entire Middle East and its oil.

The third recent development is the most telling.

Israel is threatening to bomb and rocket Iran's nuclear power facilities, just as it did in 1981 against Iraq's. Israel could not even hint at such a drastic measure without the full support of the U.S. government.

According to a report in the Swiss-based ISN Security Watch, "the Israeli press has reported that 100 F-16I advanced jet fighters were recently delivered from the U.S. to Israel, mentioning specifically that they were able to fly to Iran and back, and that they were capable of carrying 'special weapons.'" The Iranian military, which indicated they were capable of defending themselves against such an attack, called attention to the U.S. role behind any Israeli aggression.

The U.S.-Israel relationship is based not on the Bush administration alone or on the existence of an Israeli lobby here, but on U.S. imperialism's long-time shared interest with the ruling class of Israel, which abets U.S. efforts to dominate the oil-rich Middle East and try to crush any real independence or sovereignty. It's a goal that will never be achieved. □

The media & McGreevey

If you have waded through the mainstream news about New Jersey and its political mud-slinging since Aug. 13, two facts are still clear.

That day, the highest-ranking U.S. public official ever came out as gay when Democratic Gov. James McGreevey announced his resignation because of an extramarital affair with another man.

And his coming-out confirmed that oppression on the basis of sexuality, sex and gender is still rampant in the U.S.

McGreevey, at 42, with degrees from Columbia, Georgetown and Harvard universities, has had to deny and conceal his identity through two marriages, two children and a lifetime of political ambition. In response, headlines in the tabloid presses screamed the vilest stereotypes about gay men.

This certainly demonstrates the depth of homophobia still ruling the editors' desks, backrooms, courtrooms and state houses of the U.S.

But though McGreevey wrapped himself in a star-spangled rainbow flag by saying he was "a gay American," he did not quit for that reason, but because of a possible sexual harassment charge against him by Golan Cipel, the man McGreevey had placed on the state payroll in a high-paying Homeland Security post.

Whatever the details in this instance, sexual harassment is undoubtedly a workplace hazard for millions of people, mostly women, targeted by bosses who feel they can abuse with impunity, holding them hostage for their jobs.

But rumors of a McGreevey resignation had swirled for months, as criminal charges for dirty campaign finances piled up against some of his close political allies. It seems that some power brokers in New Jersey have wanted to get rid of him for quite a while, perhaps because he didn't reward their candidates in patronage, perhaps because of modest reforms he won to the benefit of poor and working people.

The New Jersey Democrats and Republicans are now fighting over future control of the New Jersey budget billions. They are not addressing the misery of oppression based on sexuality, sex and gender. They are not acknowledging the events that occur in the lives of ordinary working people because of that oppression.

The fight against such injustice can only be led by an independent movement of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, in alliance with the forces of women's liberation—a movement toward a socialism where all human beings can develop fully, where none of us are "mere instruments of production" or of politics under capitalism. □

Haitian masses reject election ploy

By G. Dunkel

U.S. Ambassador to Haiti James Foley, in an Aug. 20 news conference, called on the Haitian government to "hold free and fair elections" to put together a new, stable government by Feb. 7, 2005.

However, only days earlier, thousands of people from the poorest neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince had been in the streets to say that they had already held their national election. And they wanted their president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide—who was constitutionally elected and then deposed in a U.S.-implemented coup Feb. 29—returned to power.

The Aug. 14 street actions were to celebrate the 214th anniversary of the voodoo ceremony at the Bois-Caiman at which Boukman Dutty kicked off a revolution that eventually swept Haiti's French slave masters from their massively profitable class position.

Before the demonstration started in Bel Air, one of the poorest neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince, the demonstrators held a voodoo ceremony in front of the Church of Perpetual Help to symbolically link their march to the struggle begun by Boukman.

At a news conference on Aug. 13, one of the organizers explained, "Our national independence was not a gift from foreigners. Our ancestors shed much blood to obtain it. ... We heard with astonishment the news that the de facto government is planning a new celebration of the bicentennial of Haiti's independence, despite the fact that our country is currently occupied. ... However, this plan shouldn't astonish us since the de facto government is a concoction of the imperialist system." (Haïti-Progrès)

Thousands of demonstrators left Bel Air, marched through downtown Port-au-Prince and passed the U.S. Embassy. There they denounced a game between Haiti's national soccer teams and Brazil's world champions organized by the U.S.-imposed government at the urging of the U.S. ambassador.

Brazil is heading up the United Nations forces that replaced the U.S. and French armies, which began their occupation of Haiti at the end of February.

In front of the National Palace, the marchers criticized the current "government" as collaborators, and demanded freedom for the leaders and militants of Aristide's party, Fanmi Lavalas, now held in a number of prisons.

Another march started from Cité Soleil, an extremely poor neighborhood of Port-au-Prince. There was also a march in Cap-Haïtien, Haiti's second-largest city, which emphasized the exorbitant rise in the cost of living.

Repression continues

While the people are still in the streets, repression continues. The exoneration of two bloody-handed mass murderers in a hasty, all-night trial on Aug. 17 was a menacing development.

In September 1995, Louis Jodel Chamblain, second-in-command of the right-wing group FRAPH, and Jackson Joanis, a former army captain who led the Port-au-Prince Anti-Gang Unit, had both been convicted in absentia for the murder of Antoine Izméry. Izméry, a Haitian businessman of Lebanese descent, the main financial backer of Aristide and a well-known rights activist, had been killed on Sept. 11, 1993.

Both Chamblain and Joanis were found "not guilty" at dawn after a nonstop, all-night, 14-hour trial at which only one prosecution witness dared show up. The trial date had been set only three business days earlier.

Every single human rights organization that concerns itself with Haiti—from Amnesty International to the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti—along with the New York Times and the Washington Post had to denounce the trial, using terms like "sham" and "mockery of justice." The Times went so far as to editorialize that the Latortue government "shields its political gangster allies from justice."

But they should have also been condemning the U.S., which pulls the strings of the Latortue government. Washington wants to keep the mass murderers and vicious criminals used to drive Aristide from power happy—and available to repress the mass resistance that is simmering in Haiti. □

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Revolutionary crisis grows in Nepal

Invisible blockade of capital 100 percent successful

By Deirdre Griswold

There were no barriers. No vehicles. No shots were fired. No people appeared on the roads. But the Maoist blockade of Kathmandu, capital of the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal, was 100 percent effective. For a whole week, beginning Aug. 18, nothing moved on the roads leading to the capital, according to all the international media. Then the revolutionary guerrilla movement suspended its blockade on Aug. 24, allowing food and fuel to reach the city of 1.5 million people.

They had made their point.

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has become the undisputed authority throughout the countryside of this impoverished land of 25 million people. The monarchy of King Gyanendra, who gained the throne in June 2001 after most of the royal family were murdered, is supported almost exclusively from the outside—by the U.S., Britain and India. A revolutionary crisis is growing, spurred on by entrenched poverty, control of most productive land by the rich, and the elites' monopoly on political power.

The CPM (Maoist) launched a guerrilla war eight years ago, after the strategy of the traditional left to bring about reforms through parliamentary means failed. In April of this year, the whole country was virtually closed down by a general strike, called by the Maoists to protest the killings, arrests and disappearances of the group's leaders and activists. For two days, Nepal reportedly "came to a standstill" as the strike closed "almost all shops, schools, businesses and factories." (French Press Agency, April 7)

This was compelling evidence that urban workers and elements of the middle class, as well as the peasantry, were looking to the Maoists for leadership in the struggle for social change. The other left parties issued a statement of support for the Maoist-called strike. The guerrilla movement's leader, Prachandra, or "The Fierce," called for "unity among all political forces" against the king.

But, once the strike was over, the government seemed to think it could resume business as usual. With the help of U.S.-provided helicopters and advanced weapons, it "disappeared" more revolutionary activists. The Maoists are demanding the release of political prisoners and an accounting of all the missing.

The monarchy accuses the Maoists of wanting to fight rather than negotiate. But it also has characterized them as "terrorists," thus making it impossible for any of them to come forward. If they appear in public, they are subject to arrest. However, it is clear that these revolutionaries move freely among the people in most parts of the country, where the elitist government has lost control.

The Nepalese monarchy is following the lead of the Bush administration in Washington, which has put the Maoist organization on its list of international "terrorists." In so doing, Washington is criminalizing the struggle of the masses for revolutionary change in one of the most oppressed, downtrodden countries in the world.

Is this struggle relevant to workers in the United States? Absolutely. An article in EcommerceTimes.org on Aug. 24 warned U.S. investors: "Disintegrating Nepali Monarchy a Threat to Outsourcing." Saying that "The Rana monarchy in Nepal is collapsing" and that "A military solution is no longer possible," business analyst Anthony Mitchell concludes that "Recent events in Nepal could spill over into India and hurt technology and financial firms in the United States and UK."

Of course, he's talking about profits for U.S. and British investors, not jobs for the workers. U.S. workers have every reason to hope that revolutionary change favoring the masses will sweep the Indian subcontinent. □

Bush, Kerry and Venezuela

By Monica Moorehead

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to guess where the current U.S. administration stands on Venezuela. President George W. Bush has openly sided with the right-wing oligarchy there and its reactionary Aug. 15 referendum that failed to oust democratically elected President Hugo Chávez.

Bush, along with the CIA, helped to orchestrate the illegal attempted coup on April 11, 2002, in which Chávez was taken prisoner. Two days later, thanks to the direct intervention of the Venezuelan masses, Chávez was returned to the Presidential Palace with a hero's welcome.

Sen. John Kerry, the Democratic Party's presidential candidate, has a view of Venezuela as well. On March 19, Kerry made a statement in support of the referendum. The following are excerpts from this statement:

"Throughout his time in office, President Chávez has repeatedly undermined democratic institutions by using extra-legal means, including politically motivated incarcerations, to consolidate power. In fact, his close relationship with Fidel Castro has raised serious questions about his commitment to leading a truly democratic government."

Kerry went on to say: "Moreover, President Chávez's policies have been detrimental to our interests and those of his neighbors. He has compromised efforts to eradicate drug cultivation by allowing Venezuela to become a haven for narco-terrorists, and sowed instability in the region by supporting anti-government insurgents in Colombia."

Putting aside any tactical differences, including rhetoric, Bush and Kerry share the view that Chávez is "undemocratic," even though the voters have given him a wide margin of victory several times. Bush and Kerry identify with the interests of Venezuela's comprador bourgeoisie as opposed to those of the vast majority of the Venezuelan masses.

Workers World Party is running three working-class, nationally oppressed candidates in the upcoming elections: John Parker for president, Teresa Gutierrez for vice-president and LeiLani Dowell for the Congress. The WWP candidates issued a statement on Venezuela several days before the defeat of the Aug. 15 recall referendum.

Their statement read in part: "Since coming to office in 1998 and being re-elected in 2000, President Chávez has consistently mobilized Venezuela's workers and peasants to fight in their own interests. He has stood up to U.S. imperialism at home and abroad, including opposing the brutal war and occupation of Iraq. He has moved to put oil profits to use for people's needs and to distribute land to the poor.

"His government has strengthened relations with socialist Cuba in defiance of the United States. Cuba, in turn, has stretched out its hand in solidarity, providing personnel to assist with health care, literacy and education programs.

"The Venezuelan masses understand that the recall referendum is yet another plot by U.S. imperialism and Venezuela's wealthy to turn back history. The U.S. regime, whether Republican or Democrat, can't abide an independent Latin American country that is avowedly anti-imperialist, one that seeks to use its oil revenues and other resources to lift up the poor and oppressed instead of filling the bank vaults of U.S. finance capital."

The issue of Venezuela is one important example that illustrates why a revolutionary Marxist party participates in the bourgeois elections.

Candidates such as Parker, Gutierrez and Dowell are running in the 2004 elections not to validate them. These candidates are using the electoral arena as a platform to speak independent class truth to the broader political movement, a great number of whom have succumbed to the "anyone but Bush" phenomenon. □

Venezuelan tells WW:

'The right wing can't stop history'

Marcos Fuenmayor, second secretary of the Venezuelan Mission to the United Nations, told a Workers World Party meeting in New York on Aug. 20 that the "unfinished revolutionary process" in his country has a solid base in the popular movement and is going forward. He described the present stage as one of reforms in which the nationalized oil industry is being used to finance dramatic improvements in the lives of the people. These are being opposed by the wealthy elite and the U.S., but they "can't stop history." Fuenmayor said that the right-wing has had to accept the results of the recent referendum, which President Hugo Chávez won easily, because they fear instability in oil prices and social upheaval throughout Latin America.

Marcos Fuenmayor, with tie and jacket, after speaking at WW meeting. WW PHOTO: ARTURO PEREZ-SAAD

People in the audience, many of whom have marched in support of Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution, received Fuenmayor warmly as he explained how the Bolivarian process began with the redistribution of the oil revenue. The 2002 coup against Chávez was instigated by executives in the oil industry close to the multinational oil companies. After the people foiled that attempt, the right-wing tried to shut down oil production. But again they failed. Now, "the social movement managed to stop this and is in control of the oil industry." Responding to questions, he emphasized that the Venezuelan army differs from that in Chile, for example, in that the officers mainly came from the poor and rose through the ranks. He also described how the 2002 coup revealed the backward elements in the military, who were removed.

—Deirdre Griswold

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Mientras la economía se reduce

Las divisiones entre los imperialistas se profundiza

Por Milt Neidenberg

Al enfriarse la economía de los EEUU, ¿se enfriarán también los mercados globales?

Los estornudos ya comenzaron. Aún antes de que la Reserva Federal subiera 25 puntos la tasa de interés para alcanzar el 1.50 %, mundialmente las fábricas redujeron su producción en junio, cimentando dudas sobre la durabilidad de la recuperación de la economía global.

La economía de los Estados Unidos se redujo 0.03% en junio. En China, el crecimiento de la producción en 12 meses se redujo a un 16% de un 17% que se había reportado en mayo. Para el Japón, que depende de las exportaciones a esos países para el crecimiento de su economía, la caída de un ritmo anual de 6.6% al 1.7% para el segundo trimestre ha sorprendido a los inversionistas, economistas y a los políticos.

La economía alemana, la más grande de Europa, sufrió una pérdida de 1.9%, mientras que Bretaña bajó un 0.03% e Italia un 0.07%. Incluyendo a los Estados Unidos y al Japón, estos cinco países crean casi el 60% de la producción económica mundial.

En Asia, la producción industrial cayó un 3.4% en Singapur, 2% en Corea del Sur y 2.5% en Taiwán, según el Wall Street Journal del 10 de agosto.

Esta caída muestra como las economías capitalistas están atadas unas a las otras en la economía global. Esto demuestra la falsa imagen fabricada por las grandes potencias capitalistas que dicen que las reglas y regulaciones, —diseñadas por la Organización Mundial de Comercio—pueden mantener un estado estable y balanceado en el comercio y sus relaciones económicas.

Según el diario The New York Times del 14 de agosto: "El déficit del intercambio de comercio de los Estados Unidos subió en junio a una cifra récord de $55.8 mil millones cuando la importación de petróleo aumentó y el lento crecimiento en Japón y Europa hizo disminuir las demandas de exportación... las exportaciones de los Estados Unidos tuvieron la caída más grande desde septiembre del año 2000, y ... el alza en los precios de energía llevó a un débil gasto de los consumidores en el 2001, reportó el Departamento de Comercio.

"Un economista de la compañía Lehman Brothers resumió así la creciente crisis económica, 'El creciente hiato sugiere que la demanda la está satisfaciendo el extranjero y no la producción y el empleo doméstico.'"

Recientemente, la Organización de Cooperación Económica y Desarrollo (OCED), una prestigiosa organización analista de la economía, ha estado señalando la reducción en el crecimiento de la producción industrial desde febrero. (Wall Street Journal, 10 de agosto)

El papel de la OCED

La OCED está compuesta por los 30 países más ricos del mundo, todos compartiendo un compromiso a la economía del mercado capitalista. Tiene relaciones con otros 70 países y organizaciones no gubernamentales, y a diferencia del Fondo Monetario Internacional y el Banco Mundial, los cuales dan miles de millones de dólares para salvar a los mercados imperialistas, la OCED por necesidad debe ser más objetiva que los gobiernos que representa.

La OCED se formó en 1961, reemplazando una organización anterior llamada Organización de Coordinación Económica Europea, la cual fue muy importante en la reconstrucción de Europa después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Trabajó junto a los bancos estadounidenses que promovieron el Plan Marshall para resucitar una Europa capitalista, cuando los Estados Unidos eran la potencia dominante. Actualmente los Estados Unidos proveen el 25% de su presupuesto total.

La OCED produce instrumentos internacionalmente acordados, decisiones y recomendaciones que promueven reglas en áreas donde acuerdos multilaterales son necesarios para hacer que la economía progrese en países individuales. Algunos de estos acuerdos están sujetos a todos los participantes.

La lentitud de la economía hará aún más difícil la coordinación de estos objetivos por la OCED. Cada uno de los países capitalistas buscará desesperadamente cómo implementar nuevas reglas y regulaciones para salvarse de la creciente crisis económica global. Conforme la economía mundial se reduce, se formarán alianzas y uniones para no perder nada del botín.

Amargas rivalidades ya habían surgido cuando el imperialismo estadounidense, con el apoyo del Reino Unido, invadió a Irak en 2003. Y la oposición al afán de los EE.UU. de apoderarse del petróleo y dominar el Medio Oriente creció, especialmente por parte de los imperialistas francesas y alemanes.

En Europa, las exportaciones a países fuera del área del euro constituyen un 20 por ciento del producto doméstico bruto de la zona de las 12 naciones del euro. Tendrán que fortalecer los acuerdos comerciales entre sus miembros y establecer nuevos acuerdos para compensar por la lenta economía de los EE.UU. Los acuerdos comerciales entre China y los japoneses y otras naciones del Asia Oriental están creciendo. Y América Latina, encabezada por Brasil, está formando su propio bloque comercial. África está emergiendo como la clave a la crisis petrolera.

En este clima desfavorable, los inversionistas están indecisos. La sobreproducción ha inundado los mercados mundiales porque la producción de mercancías y servicios excede la demanda. Añádanse los precios en alza, el aumento de las tasas de interés y la inestabilidad geopolítica debida a la resistencia heroica del pueblo iraquí, y es oficial: las bolsas de valores mundiales, barómetro del futuro crecimiento económico, están volátiles y llenas de incertidumbre.

Se necesita una estrategia de la clase trabajadora

¿Cuánto tiempo la súper potencia, los EE.UU., va a tolerar el balance de comercio desfavorable, complicado por los enormes déficites presupuestarios sin tomar represalias en contra de sus socios imperialistas? ¿Está su poder desminuyendo forzado por las contradicciones?

¿Van los gritos del proteccionismo económico a erigir barreras al "libre comercio" que ha sido una fuente de tesoro para inversionistas de los EE.UU., para los banqueros y la América corporativa? Si cada país capitalista no obtiene su beneficio de los mercados mundiales, ¿van a buscar alivio en llamadas reaccionarias de "compre productos americanos", "compre productos europeos", o "compre productos japoneses?"

Las tendencias chauvinistas, nacionalistas y patrióticas van a crecer si la crisis global sigue. Esto va a tomar tiempo dado que los Estados Unidos va a hacer todo lo posible para mantener el dominio de su botín de "libre comercio" por medio de intervenciones económicas, políticas, y si es necesario, militares, no importa quien gane la Casa Blanca.

Los despidos, recortes de salarios, beneficios y servicios sociales, y las presiones para incrementar la productividad –son el remedio capitalista para la crisis económica.

La clase trabajadora y las nacionalidades oprimidas no pueden comprar los productos que producen, y el flagelo de la inflación empeora sus condiciones ya de por sí deterioradas. Se llama "estanflación" y es una pesadilla de la Junta de la Reserva Federal.

Ejércitos enteros de desemplead@s son el fruto de la crisis global. Hay una tasa de desempleo de dos dígitos en la Unión Europea –y un 43 por ciento de lo@s desemplead@s han carecido de trabajo por lo menos por un año. En los EE.UU. la cifra de desemplead@s, l@s que buscan empleo, y aquell@s demasiado desalentad@s de buscar empleo por no hallarlo, excede 11 millones de personas. Más de un 18 por ciento de adolescentes, principalmente jóvenes de color, están desemplead@s.

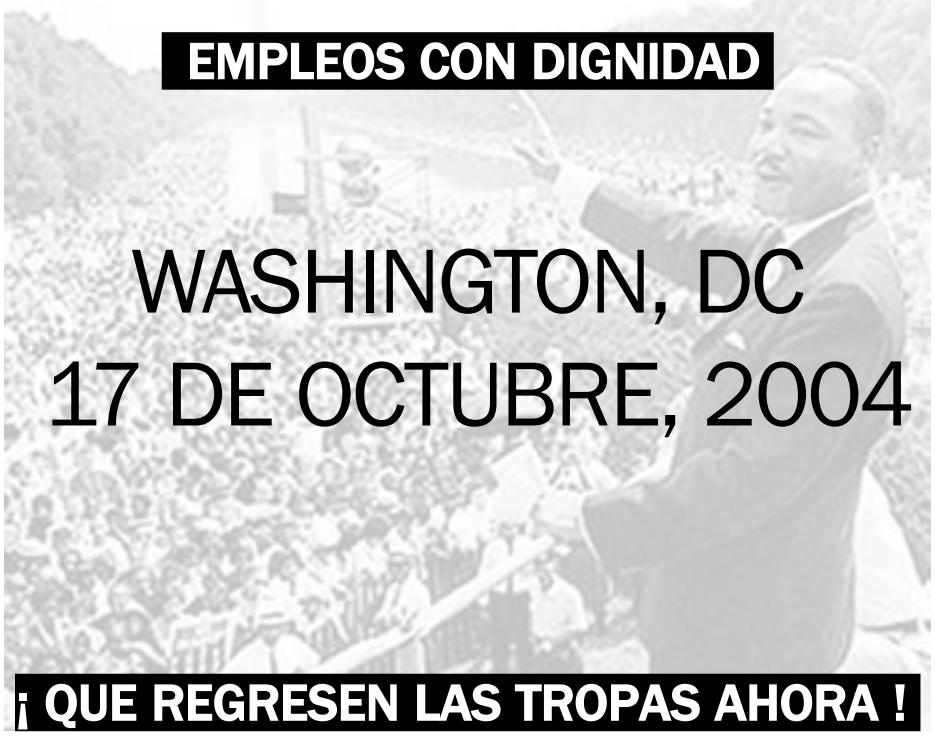
Aunque se produzca un pequeño y corto aumento en la economía de los EE.UU., se espera que George W. Bush sea el primer presidente desde Herbert Hoover en la era de la Depresión, en terminar su presidencia con una pérdida neta de empleos.

La reestructuración dramática que ha tenido lugar en los países capitalistas forzada por el látigo de la revolución científica-tecnológica y de la propiedad privada de los medios de producción ha costado millones de puestos de trabajo.

¿Cómo van a responder los y las trabajadoras y nacionalidades oprimidas? Un primer paso de una solución obrera sería hacer que la gente vuelva a trabajar con la garantía de un ingreso para todo el mundo que está sin empleo.

Al aparecer divisiones entre las potencias capitalistas, la perspectiva para la solidaridad internacional entre la clase trabajadora va a crecer. El momento está maduro para un movimiento mundial como el que llevó a cientos de miles de trabajador@s a las calles hace más de un siglo a luchar por la jornada de ocho horas. □

LA MARCHA DE UN MILLON DE TRABAJADORES



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